
Social Work Service

Theresa Stephenson

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Your Ref:

Our Ref: TS/PQ/JL

Date: 26 November 2010

Dear Philip J Measures

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002 – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

I refer to your email received on 28/10/2010. Our reference SW/147.

I am pleased to enclose the information you requested and trust that it meets your requirements.

Social Work Staff based in the Family Protection Unit do the following checks and follow up:-

All domestic abuse cases which result in the accused being arrested to appear in Court the next lawful day go through the following process on SWIFT (Social Work Information Database):

Details of the domestic incident are recorded on the accused and the victim's SWIFT records. This provides the name of the accused and the victim and details of the offence.

Details of any children witnessing the incident/children belonging to the victim and accused/children within the household are detailed on the accused and victims SWIFT records. This highlights that a Cause for Concern has been sent to the appropriate Children and Families Social Work team for their assessment.

The Court outcome is recorded on the accused and victim's SWIFT records.

Police response to domestic incidents may not result in an arrest, or the perpetrator may be reported for Undertaking or Summons to appear at a later date. Alternatively the Court may be requested to issue a Warrant if the perpetrator cannot be located immediately. For these cases, if a full Police report is not available, the Family Protection Unit task the police officers dealing with the incident to submit a Cause for Concern regarding any children belonging to

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the victim and/or perpetrator. This will subsequently go to the appropriate Children and Families Social Work team.

When the Children and Families Team receive a Police Cause for Concern in relation to domestic violence, checks are made on all the children in the house. The victim and perpetrator, Details of the domestic incident are recorded on the children's, the accused and the victim's SWIFT records. This provides the name of the accused and the victim and details of the offence.

Contact is then made with professional staff in other agencies (ie Health Visitor, Nursery and Schools to provide them information regarding the incident and obtain background information on the family. Liaison also takes place with colleagues in the Criminal Justice Team, if they have previously or currently are working with the perpetrator.

The Children and Families Team then make an assessment on appropriate follow up depending on the severity or frequency of the assault. Social Work Services priority is to ensure that the victim and the children continue to be safe. The Procurator Fiscal determine whether there is sufficient evidence to prosecute and the Courts determine whether there is sufficient evidence to find the alleged perpetrator guilty and what sentence should be imposed.

If the offender is placed on Probation, Social Work Staff in the Criminal Justice Team undertake a program of work with the offender. This involves individual contact at the offenders home and in the Social Work Office.

Fife Police and Fife Council has recently introduced Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The MARAC is part of a co-ordinated community response to domestic violence abuse, incorporating representatives from statutory, community and voluntary agencies working with victim and survivors, children and the alleged perpetrator. This group meets every 2 weeks to monitor and track high risk offenders and ensure there is a co-ordinated care package of support and assistance to victims and their children .

The purpose of MARAC is to improve service response to victims at high risk of harm of domestic abuse through:

- The sharing of information across agencies
- Producing multi agency safety plans to reduce the risk to victims and any children
- Sharing an awareness of risk posed by the perpetrator to the victim or third party
- Reducing repeat victimisation
- To hold the perpetrator to account.

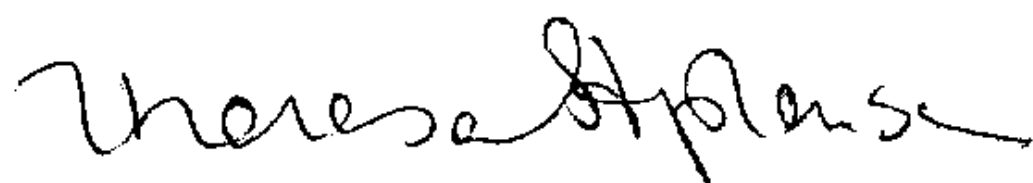
I trust the above answers your Freedom for Information request.

If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request, you have the right to request a review of the decision. Please write to: Chief Legal Officer, Performance & Organisational Support, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, KY7 5LT or e-mail to info.review@fife.gov.uk.

The law provides for you to make this request up to 60 workings days from when we received your enquiry or 40 working days from when you receive this correspondence whichever is the later date. Where the outcome of the review fails to resolve the matter to your complete satisfaction you have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner for a decision.

Fife Council will consider and seek to resolve any request to the Chief Legal Officer that falls outside these time scales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa Stephenson', written in a cursive style.

Theresa Stephenson
Service Manager