



## **A Statement from our Independent Chair Dr Adi Cooper OBE**

On behalf of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, I want to extend our condolences to the family, friends and all those affected by the tragic circumstances that led to this Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) regarding 'Paul'. We understand that at the centre of every SAR is a person whose life mattered deeply to those who knew and cared for them.

The Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board commissioned an independently led Safeguarding Adult Review in September 2023 regarding how different agencies worked together to support and safeguard 'Paul' during the year before he died. The purpose of a Safeguarding Adult Review is not to assign blame, but to ensure that its findings lead to real, meaningful change and improvements in collaborative working between agencies to strengthen safeguarding practice. The reviewer has identified multi-agency lessons to be learnt and made recommendations to improve practice and how agencies work together to safeguard residents in these circumstances.

In the recommendations, the reviewer proposed that we advocated for 'cuckooing' to be a criminal offence. Therefore, we welcome the changes in legislation announced earlier this year, just as the Review was signed off by the Board, addressing this, proposing that cuckooing becomes a criminal offense. We hope that this will prove effective in supporting people in similar circumstances in future where this type of coercion, control and exploitation takes place.

As the Independent Chair of the Board, I want to acknowledge the impact of a SAR, not only on the professionals and agencies involved, but also on individuals, families and wider communities. We recognise that some of the information included in this SAR may be difficult for some to revisit. However we consider that it is important to publish Reviews so that they are publicly available, for accountability and wider learning.

The reviewer has provided insight and understanding of challenges faced by

practitioners and agencies who were working with 'Paul'. He has focused on what can be learnt from what happened in order to help to prevent future recurrence. In particular, he has recommended raising awareness of cuckooing to support more preventative activity and updating the Camden SAPB "Multi-Agency Cuckooing" guidance to signpost to more legal and other options for intervention.

The SAPB will monitor the implementation of the action plans, developed in response to the reviewers recommendations, to be assured that improvements are achieved, and there is continued learning and collaborative working to try to prevent such a situation from happening again. We remain committed to ongoing learning and improvement in safeguarding adults' activity in Camden.