



Department
for Work &
Pensions

www.gov.uk/dwp

Central FoI Team
Caxton House
6-12 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA

Owen Stevens
(Child Poverty Action Group)
ostevens@cpag.org.uk

Email: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk

Our Ref: FOI2020/03252

Date: 20 February 2020

Dear Owen Stevens,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 24 January 2020. You asked for:

"This FOI refers to reporting here: <https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/the-death-of-errol-graham-man-starved-to-death-after-dwp-wrongly-stopped-his-benefits/>

The story reports various comments by an assistant coroner, including the following:

The assistant coroner said: "There simply is not sufficient evidence as to how he was functioning, however, it is likely that his mental health was poor at this time - he does not appear to be having contact with other people, and he did not seek help from his GP or support agencies as he had done previously."

[...]

But she decided not to write a regulation 28 report demanding changes to DWP's safeguarding procedures to "prevent future deaths" because the department insisted that it was already completing a review of its safeguarding, which was supposed to finish last autumn.

Please send me:

a) The terms of reference or any similar document setting out the scope of the review referred to in that news story

b) The results of the review referred to in that news story"

DWP Response

It may be helpful if I explain the role of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act provides a legal right of access to recorded information held by a public authority like DWP, subject to certain exemptions that may apply. The Act does not oblige a public authority to create new information to answer questions; nor does it require a public authority to give advice, opinion or explanation, generate answers to questions, or create or obtain information we do not hold.

Your request would need new information to be created which we are not obliged to do.

I confirm that the Department holds no recorded information to answer your request. However, to be helpful you may find the following explanation useful. This has however been provided outside of our obligations under the Freedom of Information regime.

In response to your first request, Officials conducted case research, considered coroners reports and engaged through local networks in DWP operations.

In response to your second request, there is no formal commission to publish a review. The purpose of the work was to identify areas where more could be done to build on the support DWP currently provides to vulnerable claimants.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Department quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,
Policy Group FOI Team
Department for Work and Pensions

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dw.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central FOI Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF
Web: ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745