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Dear Dr Van Dellen,

## **Liam Stephen Allan (Deceased) – Case 25548493**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April 2025 and the enclosed Regulation 28 Report following the inquest into the tragic death of Liam Stephen Allan.

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) wishes to express its condolences to Mr Allan's family and acknowledges the important matters raised in the Prevention of Future Deaths Report. We are committed to ensuring that action is taken to mitigate future risks associated with our riverside and watercourse areas.

### **Current Position**

LBBD acknowledges its responsibilities from both riparian landowner and various health and safety perspectives. While the Borough currently implements a general duty of care across its open spaces and water-adjacent areas, we acknowledge the need for a coordinated and risk-based approach to identifying and mitigating foreseeable dangers.

### **Planned Actions**

We will be undertaking the following steps as part of our proactive response:

#### **1. Comprehensive Survey and Asset Mapping**

A Borough-wide survey of all waterbodies and riverside locations will be initiated to:

- Identify current locations and conditions of buoyancy aids, signage, fencing, and other safety infrastructure.
- Highlight gaps or deteriorated assets that require immediate or future attention.

This task will be coordinated by our Drainage Engineer, working in conjunction with other LBBD landowners and service departments, to ensure all relevant areas (including Parks, Housing, and Highways) are assessed.

#### **2. Risk Assessment Criteria**

Each water-adjacent site will be assessed using the following criteria:

- The nature of the watercourse (e.g., depth, flow rate, physical hazards).

- Public access levels and demographics (e.g., areas used by children or school groups).
- Visibility and accessibility for rescue operations.
- Presence of hazards such as steep banks, culverts, weirs, or areas with difficult egress.
- Known areas with historical incidents or near misses, to the extent that this data is accessible.

### 3. Standardisation of Safety Equipment

Following the assessment:

- We will install or upgrade buoyancy aids in high-risk locations, prioritising high-traffic public access areas.
- Aids will be clearly marked with reflective white stripes or similar enhancements to improve visibility in low light.
- Consideration will be given to the lighting of buoyancy aids, especially in locations used during evening hours or with known low visibility.

### 4. Inspection and Maintenance Regime

Once installation and upgrades are complete, a structured inspection and maintenance programme will be implemented to:

- Ensure ongoing functionality and visibility of equipment.
- Replace damaged or missing assets promptly.

### **Timetable**

- Survey and asset mapping to commence by early July 2025.
- Risk assessments and recommendations expected by October 2025.
- Installation/upgrades and inspection regime to follow in late 2025, subject to resource availability.

### **Cross-Agency and Emergency Communication Issues**

While our Borough does not manage emergency communications between the Metropolitan Police Service and the London Fire Brigade, we strongly support improvements in this area. We will work with the Local Resilience Forum and relevant partners to advocate for enhanced inter-agency communication, particularly in critical response scenarios.

We trust the above addresses the concerns outlined in your report. We remain committed to ensuring the safety of our communities and welcome any further input from your office.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name]

Chief Executive