



Record of Inquest

Following an Investigation commenced on the 21st day of June 2021;
And an Inquest opened on the Thirtieth June 2021;
And an Inquest hearing at Court 1 Chesterfield, Chesterfield Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield,
Derbyshire on the Sixteenth November 2023, heard before Matthew KEWLEY in the said coroner's area.

The following is the record of the inquest (including the statutory determination and where required, findings)

- 1 Name of Deceased (if known)
Gracie Elizabeth SPINKS
- 2 Medical cause of death:
 - I a **Stab wound to the neck**
 - I b
 - I c

II
- 3 How, when and where and for investigations where section 5 (2) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 applies, in what circumstances the deceased came by his or her death.

**In April 2020 Gracie started employment at Xbite, an e-commerce company close to her horse field in Duckmanton. A supervisor started there in 2015 .
Gracie and the supervisor shared a brief friendship which was not romantic.
On 16 December 2020 Gracie gently ended the friendship with the supervisor via text message. The supervisor did not accept Gracie's decision, he continued to contact her and abused his position at work by asking others to spy on her.
On 4 January 2021 the supervisor parked in a layby opposite her horse field which upset and distressed her. She reported this to Xbite.
Xbite suspended the supervisor and conducted a formal investigation into his behaviour. This concluded direct and indirect harassment and an abuse of power towards other colleagues.
On 4 February 2021 Gracie reported the stalking and harassment to the Derbyshire Constabulary and it was marked as a real and immediate risk.
A limited investigation was undertaken by the Derbyshire Constabulary a verbal conversation was had with both Gracie and the supervisor and the stalking case was closed as low risk.
The Derbyshire Constabulary have admitted to the following serious failings in the handling of the case.
Following the 4 February 2021 report from Gracie about harassment from the supervisor.**

- (i) **A Form 90 should have been used to conduct a risk assessment;**
- (ii) **The matter should have been referred to the Public Protection Unit (PPU);**
- (iii) **The supervisor's disciplinary file should have been sought from Xbite;**
- (iv) **and a 'warning' should not have been given to the supervisor.**

On 6 May 2021 a dog walker discovered a bag of weapons on a public bridleway close to the horse field, due to the nature of the contents and a threatening note, the bag was reported to the police.

**Derbyshire Constabulary responded to the call but came to the conclusion that this was found property, with no concern or danger to the public and was booked in for destruction.
Following the 6 May 2021 report from the dog walker about the found rucksack:**

- (i) **Officers who dealt with the found rucksack should have conducted an investigation;**
- (ii) **The location should have been visited;**
- (iii) **House to house enquiries should have been undertaken in the area;**
- (iv) **Checks should have been undertaken on police systems;**
- (v) **An intelligence log should have been submitted;**
- (vi) **Proper consideration should have been given to the best way of seeking the public's**

assistance with identifying the bag or owner, for example by the use of social media;
 (vii) Proper consideration should have been given to how the M&S receipt could have been used to identify the owner of the bag, for example by seeking a production order; and
 (viii) The rucksack and contents should have been properly exhibited and itemised when booked in and not simply listed as 'Brown Nike SB Bag with contents'.
 However, it could not be concluded that these failings contributed to Gracie's death on 18 June 2021.

On the morning of 18 June 2021 the supervisor was recorded leaving his home at 06:32am with a black holdall and then at 06:52am a man matching his description was seen walking onto Duckmanton Road.

At 07:45am Gracie left her home and drove to the horse stable on Tom Lane, Duckmanton. At 08:05am another horse owner and her young daughter discovered Gracie behind the stable with multiple stab wounds. A male figure was spotted running away at the bottom of the field.

999 was called at 08:13am and emergency services arrived at 08:32am. Attempts were made to resuscitate Gracie but sadly she was pronounced dead at the scene.

A number of items were collected at the scene, including a serrated knife which matched the description of the knife identified by the pathologist as the weapon used to attack Gracie. The knife and other items were owned by the supervisor. It was the supervisor that killed Gracie.

4 Conclusion of the Coroner as to the death
Unlawful killing

5 Further particulars required by the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953 to be registered concerning the death

(a) Date and place of birth: Nineteenth October 1997 Chesterfield	
(b) Name and Surname of deceased: Gracie Elizabeth SPINKS	
(c) Sex: Female	(d) Maiden surname of woman who has married: ----
(e) Date and place of death: Eighteenth June 2021 In A Horse Field Belonging To Blue Lodge Farm, Staveley Road, Arkwright Town, Chesterfield, Derbyshire	
(f) Occupation and usual address: Swimming Instructor & Warehouse Operative, 19 Newbridge Lane, Old Whittington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire	



Signature of **Matthew KEWLEY, Assistant Coroner**