

Witness Name:

Statement No.:

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Exhibits:

Dated:

## THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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### Witness Statement of Helen CHAMBERLAIN

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I, Helen CHAMBERLAIN, will say as follows:-

1. This statement is additional to the two previous statements made by me on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018 and 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018.
2. After I took over as Head of Public Protection I began a review into the structure of the department which culminated in Public Protection becoming a stand alone department. My reason for instigating that review was that I felt the structures were such that Public Protection were not given the same resource and support as other areas of detective work within the Force. I felt that the department needed a 'voice'. The previous structure meant that the head of crime would decide internally where to put their detective resources , either City , County, Serious Crime or Public Protection.
3. It was when DCS Helen Jebb took over as head of crime that DCI Robert Griffin and DCI Simon Firth held positions within the City and the County. My experience was that there was a situation emerging whereby any requests for resource, despite being authorised by the Senior Command Team were thwarted at this point. Given the passage of time and the fact that I have been retired nearly a year I cannot recollect dates and times now, however, I can give an example of the type of activity I was faced with, which DI Yvonne Dales alluded to in her testimony at the hearing. At some point I was given 7 additional staff to support Public Protection and the increasing workloads, not just with Operation Xeres but other areas of Public Protection such as rape and the investigation of indecent images of children. I suggested, rather than had happened previously, where I may have been 'given' staff , a number of these staff appeared to either work part time, had medical issues or were restricted from full duties in some other way and meant that their ability to support an uplift in resourcing was minimal; that we go out to advert for people who may want to do this type of work. This approach was agreed amongst the four of us. However, a number of people who applied were deemed people that the divisions didn't want to 'lose' and therefore their move was prevented and instead I was sent staff, most unwillingly. One of those staff immediately went off sick and I believe took the force to an employment tribunal as she

did not want to do this type of work. This caused my supervisors additional work in managing the absence and trying to support the individual, so instead of relieving the pressure and helping us to support the investigation, staff were now with a heavier workload and supervisors dealing with increased sickness.

4. There are numerous more examples of this type, I'm sure there will be email exchanges between us to support my assertions.
5. Due to the fact that the department was stand alone, I would then have to report back to the Senior Command Team, my line manager ,the ACC Crime and explain that I still don't have the staff that they had agreed. I felt that there was annoyance that four relatively senior managers couldn't sort this out to best support the greater good.
6. I did get the impression that both the DCIs, who then became Superintendents too in their respective divisions felt that I was 'empire building' rather than trying to manage the increasing work load and operational need. I don't think anyone disagreed that this area of policing business had seen the biggest rise in demand of any area over the previous five years yet when it came down to practically resourcing it, I felt that because I then would have a greater number of resource in the Public Protection command then it wouldn't happen.
7. It just seemed a constant battle to get staff into the department, despite the fact that senior officers had agreed the numbers. It was I at the fore, trying to get the correct and properly trained resource. I understand that there were other areas of criminal investigation too that needed resourcing such as organised criminality and it would have been difficult for the command team to prioritise the need. It was ultimately the Chief's decision to resource departments.
8. DCS Jebb at some point during this time had asked DCI Griffin to provide PIP4 support to the SIO, at the beginning this was DI Dales. I accepted this support and am aware a number of conversations took place between him and the various SIOs. I chaired the operational meeting whereby he would report back on those conversations. We did have a debate about one case where he felt the lines of inquiry had drawn a blank and that the investigation should be finalised. I disagreed and explained my view that this type of inquiry isn't like others, because someone can't recall the colour of a car or a coat, doesn't mean to say that in three months someone else comes forward and adds more that picture and allows us to explore in more detail. I didn't authorise the SIO to close that and indeed a week later there was more detail which then allowed a charge on a particular individual. DI Pete Quinn was the SIO at that time.
9. I did ask at a very early stage whether the Operation could be classed as a critical incident for the organisation as it met the criteria. In doing that the force would have been obliged to resource it. I can recall the response from DCS Jebb, it was by email and was on the lines of, let's get it resourced first and then declare it critical. This was clear to me that there was an acceptance it wasn't resourced and no intention in the immediate to do so. On arrival of ACC Jupp in June 2013, he agreed at the first

meeting that the incident should be declared a critical incident and thus a structure to support that through internal Gold groups and latterly working with partners in the formal structures designed through the Working Together ' guidance

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10. I was made aware that both Supt Griffin and DCS Jebb were briefing the Chief about the operation outside of my formal briefs with him. Whether that was in passing or a formal appointment I do not know. It was around this time and after ACC Jupp had left the Force that I was asked to look at the ramifications of scaling down the Operation. I was disheartened that this was even a discussion at this point given my briefings to the Senior command team.
11. It was then, that I spoke with DI Dales, who was, as the rest of my management team were, aware of my struggles to get the right resource. I explained to her what I had been asked and my understanding of why. I asked her to provide me with a report that I could share with the Senior Command team with a structure highlighting the pros and cons of scaling down the operation to show the political and community impact of doing so particularly with partners.
12. I do not recall the outcome as I was then moved from my post to work in the region and Supt Griffin replaced me

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**DPA**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 \_\_\_\_\_