

Your reference:

DPA

Our reference:

Date: 25th August 1999



METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE

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Re: Operation Mapperton - R -v- Starling et al

Further to our meeting of Thursday last (19th), please find the first batch of witness statements for your perusal. These statements relate in the main, to STARLING. In the interests of simplicity, you will no doubt wish to review the case against this suspect in isolation, before we submit further statements relating to the other suspects we discussed.

In addition to receipt of the statements, you asked that I provide a written resume of what the police wish to obtain advice or instruction on. The following represents the main issues of concern to myself and DCI SUETT;

- One victim of abuse [redacted] is also known to be an abuser himself, with offences committed by him whilst he was resident at St Leonard's. Our intention is for him to be interviewed under caution in relation to offences committed by him and submit an advice file to you for decision. Only after your decision as regards prosecution, will we seek to obtain from him the requisite witness statement concerning the offences of which he himself was a victim. Advice is sought as to whether this is the appropriate course of action to take in relation to [redacted] and indeed towards any further such persons in identical predicaments, who happen to come to notice as the enquiry develops.
- Advice is sought on the number of victims/witnesses to pursue in relation to each of the suspects. It will be appreciated, that there already exists, a significant number of witnesses who are willing to give evidence against STARLING. Our perception is, that there already exists, sufficient evidence to provide a strong case against this individual, and to provide sufficient sentencing leeway for any Court. It is not therefore, seen as a proper use of investigative resources, to continue *ad infinitum*, to pursue potential witnesses. However, this is not the situation with other suspects and we would seek advice on some sort of figure which would be deemed as an acceptable minimum number of victims/witnesses on which to base a prosecution. It is of course appreciated, that any such figure, would require a loose interpretation, based on variables such as the strength of the evidence provided by individual witnesses.
- The issue of confidentiality is one of major concern to us. The local authority (Tower Hamlets) is likely to be on the receiving end of much adverse publicity, when these matters come to trial, for failing to protect children in its care. Understandably, the Borough is fearful of breaching confidentiality when we seek sight of personnel records relating to staff, past and present, who are of interest to the enquiry. Whilst the Borough has included its Legal Department in discussions on this issue, progress has been painfully slow. Thus we feel Counsel - to - Counsel discussion, between Crown and Borough, would significantly expedite the flow of information and with it, the progress of the enquiry. Whilst appreciating the predicament of the Borough, the Police view is that there is no alternative for them, but to co - operate fully with the investigation, but this is a view which, in our submission, would be better received by them, if reinforced by the prosecuting authority.

- Mental health in general, is again a major concern area, as a number of victims have suffered in various ways as a result of their ordeals as residents in the care of Tower Hamlets. We need urgent guidance, in the form of a concrete policy decision, as regards counselling and psychiatric assistance. Our view is that the CPS, or prosecuting Counsel, may well wish to dictate the form any such assistance towards victims should take and in particular, which named professional(s) should be retained for the purpose of providing such help. It is stressed that this is the matter which causes us the most immediate concern and the one to which I would ask that you give your first priority.

The above represents the major factors of concern to the enquiry team. Once you have reviewed the attached statements of witnesses, I would appreciate your guidance on the matters raised herein and of course, and other points of interest or wisdom you feel able to impart.

Finally, I confirm that I will investigate the issue which you raised at our meeting last week, concerning the level of contact, if any, between [redacted] and [redacted] since Operation Hamoon in 1995.

My very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Daniel W. O'MALLEY
Detective Inspector