

<p>1 Thursday, 24 September 2020 2 (10.00 am) 3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Day 4 of 4 this public hearing. Ms Hill? 5 MS HILL: Good morning, chair and panel. Thank you for 6 agreeing to sit early this morning. As you know, there 7 is an application to be made by Ms Gallagher on behalf 8 of several of the core participants. 9 THE CHAIR: Please go ahead, Ms Gallagher. 10 Application by MS GALLAGHER 11 MS GALLAGHER: Thank you very much, chair and panel. May 12 I just confirm I can be seen properly and you can hear 13 me? Thank you. 14 Chair and panel and your team, we are very grateful 15 to you and to your team, STI and CTI, for making time 16 this morning, in what we recognise is already 17 a jam-packed schedule, to hear this application. I am 18 asked to make it on behalf of my own client, the Centre 19 for Women's Justice, also on behalf of Parents Against 20 Child Exploitation, PACE, and the two individuals 21 represented by Howe & Co, Maggie Oliver and Jon Wedger. 22 As Ms Sharpling said yesterday when questioning 23 Mr Orford in the afternoon, this is a public inquiry, 24 and, in the view of those I represent this morning, the 25 applicants, it is right that this issue of profound</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 concern to those who work with victims and survivors is 2 being heard in public and not being dealt with in 3 correspondence, and we are grateful to you for hearing 4 it. 5 We have a limit of 15 minutes to make this 6 application. We have liaised between us to make the 7 most effective use of time and, so you know, we have 8 agreed I will make the joint application, taking 9 approximately 12 minutes, Mr Jacobs is likely to have 10 two to three minutes to add at the end, and Mr Chapman 11 has already contributed to this joint submission. He 12 may address you very briefly if there are any matters 13 arising. 14 Ms Harrison of Slater & Gordon and Mr Suleman of 15 Clifford Chance, do not seek to address you this 16 morning, but by agreement I am asked to say the 17 following. 18 You will be aware from yesterday's letter from 19 Howe & Co that the application made by CWJ, PACE and 20 Howe & Co's clients is also supported by 21 Sarah Champion MP and the concerns it raises therefore 22 have the support of every single national-level 23 noninstitutional core participant. 24 You will also be aware from yesterday's letter that 25 CS-A2, Ms Harrison's client, the only complainant CP in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>
<p>1 this investigation -- in fact, the mother of a victim of 2 CSE -- although focused on Warwickshire, wholeheartedly 3 shares the concerns we raise regarding the timetabling 4 of this hearing and the absence of voices from victims 5 and survivors who can challenge official narratives 6 provided by institutional witnesses. 7 Chair, if I could put it this way, this means that 8 every single core participant in this investigation who 9 is complainant focused, whether a complainant 10 themselves, in the case of CS-A2, or an independent 11 individual, or an organisation which represents or works 12 with victims and survivors, shares these concerns, and 13 we speak with one voice this morning when addressing you 14 concerning the problems. 15 Now, you may wonder why these problems are being 16 raised on Day 4 of a ten-day hearing, but in truth, as 17 you know, chair, we have been raising these concerns in 18 correspondence and submissions since we first received 19 the draft timetable earlier this year, and the concerns 20 regarding the importance of meaningful involvement of 21 the voices of victims and survivors was a central theme 22 of concern to all of those I represent at the last 23 preliminary hearing in January, when we first heard of 24 the proposal to consider case studies of children in the 25 geographic areas in an attempt to plug the gap, there</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 being only one complainant represented in the geographic 2 areas. 3 So, chair and panel, the clients I represent this 4 morning, the applicants, have raised these concerns 5 again and again, and, as the hearing is playing out this 6 week, we are seeing the results of what we anticipated 7 all along, and we recognise and thank your team for the 8 efforts they have made to plug the gaps, particularly 9 over the last number of months, and to address the 10 concerns we have raised, but we are before you this 11 morning because the applicants considered these efforts 12 are simply not good enough, and you will be aware that 13 our concerns were heightened and exacerbated by what 14 occurred on Day 2. 15 I intend to address you in two parts. First, to 16 outline the problems of concern and then to turn to 17 potential solutions. 18 So in relation to the problems, the first concerns 19 timetabling. Even with the witnesses on the timetable, 20 the applicants are concerned that it is simply too tight 21 to probe witnesses effectively, and we saw that in 22 Day 2. On Day 2, we saw two complainants give evidence 23 in the morning. We then saw a hot tub of two very 24 important witnesses, the academics -- Dr Beckett and 25 Dr Hallett -- in the afternoon, and we then had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 Sheila Taylor's evidence at the tail end of 2 the afternoon. All of those I represent are of the view 3 that Day 2 was simply far too rushed, and that was most 4 apparent in relation to the evidence of the second 5 victim who gave evidence to you and the evidence of 6 the academics. 7 In relation to the second victim who gave evidence 8 to you, we were in the bizarre position of having the 9 later part of her evidence rushed through, which 10 resulted in something which my client, the Centre for 11 Women's Justice, found rather ironic, where she was 12 being asked rushed questions about how poor her 13 experience had been of giving evidence at a criminal 14 trial. When questions were being put to her, she wasn't 15 given the opportunity to expand and explain. We note 16 that, overnight, Bristol, one of the local authorities, 17 has written to you to share the concerns which the 18 applicants Sarah Champion and CS-A2 have raised in 19 yesterday's letter. It is noted in particular that 20 Bristol's legal representatives were of the view that 21 the victims' evidence on Day 2 was rushed and you didn't 22 get to hear from them in a forward-facing case study 23 about their important views on how things could improve 24 in future. 25 The result of that is, I'm afraid, that those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 I represent this morning are of the view that the 2 complainant evidence you heard on Day 2 was rushed and 3 felt rather tokenistic and hasn't enabled you to grapple 4 with key issues which will arise on Day 9 when it comes 5 to the institutional national-level witnesses. 6 In relation to timetabling, we also think that the 7 academics' evidence was rather rushed, and we then had 8 Sheila Taylor's evidence at the end of the day. I am 9 asked to say -- this is a point I make on behalf of 10 the Centre for Women's Justice, Maggie Oliver and 11 Jon Wedger -- that there were particular concerns about 12 the value that was added by Sheila Taylor's evidence, 13 and I will return to that in a moment. 14 But on Day 9 on the timetable, we can see that you 15 have two hot tubs listed. You are due to hear from the 16 Home Office, from the Department for Education and the 17 Welsh Government concurrently. That is not a hot tub in 18 the usual sense where you have two witnesses with the 19 same expertise talking about the same issue and being 20 able to bounce ideas around. This is, in essence, three 21 witnesses giving evidence concurrently on hugely 22 important and wide-ranging issues involving two 23 government departments and two countries, and that has 24 been allocated half a day, which we already think is 25 tight. But our concerns are even more exacerbated when</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>
<p>1 we look at the afternoon of Day 9 and we see that you 2 have planned for the afternoon of Day 9, first of all, 3 a hot tub of two witnesses from Ofsted, one witness from 4 the Care Quality Commission and two witnesses from 5 HMICFRS. We simply think trying to squash that evidence 6 into less than half a day is unrealistic and will lead 7 to superficial evidence giving and an inability to probe 8 the witnesses effectively. 9 Finally on that day, Gregor McGill of the CPS is 10 also squeezed in. We think, before you even turn to the 11 important issues we raised in yesterday's letter, 12 regarding the need to hear from other voices and the 13 skewed nature of the evidence on the timetable as it 14 stands, we are profoundly concerned that the time 15 allocated to that important national evidence is simply 16 insufficient. 17 We recognise, of course, that you will also be 18 hearing from Amanda Naylor of Barnardo's at the tail end 19 of Wednesday, 30 September -- again, not even a half-day 20 slot. So we think it is already too tight, even with 21 the witnesses you have listed. 22 But, more profoundly, when we look at the list 23 overall, the applicants have a grave concern that there 24 is what they have described in the headline to the 25 Howe & Co letter yesterday, "a profound imbalance in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 evidence". We have a situation where, on the timetable, 2 when you look at the national-level evidence, you are 3 hearing from a large number of the national-level 4 institutional core participants, but you are not hearing 5 from a single one of the national-level noninstitutional 6 core participants. You are not hearing from a single 7 one of those who, at a national level, represent and 8 work with victims and survivors. We are of the view 9 that, although you did hear from Sheila Taylor and you 10 will be hearing from Amanda Naylor of Barnardo's, that 11 evidence simply does not plug this gap. 12 As we made clear in the letter, we note that 13 Ms Taylor works with and provides services to 14 institutions. Much of her witness statement and indeed 15 her evidence focused on pointing out the benefits of her 16 organisation's training services. Barnardo's, 17 similarly, is commissioned by institutions to do work. 18 We recognise the importance of Barnardo's evidence, but 19 you still have a fundamental gap and a fundamental skew 20 when it comes to the evidence. 21 When you think of someone from the outside looking 22 at this hearing, they may well ask, why are we hearing 23 from one side and not the other? Why are we hearing 24 from the institutions? Why are we hearing from witness 25 after witness with corporate speak and assertions about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 how well they are doing in the fight against CSE without 2 the ability to really probe and push back against them? 3 In relation to timetabling, we also note this, which 4 is an important point: we are very conscious that, when 5 you look at other strands of this inquiry, large 6 allocations of time have been made available to other 7 topics relative to this. You have got a situation where 8 three weeks were allocated to an investigation 9 concerning two male Catholic boarding schools. All of 10 those I represent this morning are profoundly concerned 11 that only two weeks has been allocated to the issue of 12 CSE in organised networks, described by the 13 Children's Commissioner as affecting every city, town 14 and village in the UK, and also described as the biggest 15 current child sexual abuse issue in the UK today. 16 One of those I represent said to me this morning, 17 "Isn't this a case of some victims are more important 18 than others? There are some more important victims than 19 others and is this even a class issue?" Now, I raise 20 that because it is important that you are aware of 21 the perception that's been given with a strand of 22 the inquiry which is two weeks long where you don't hear 23 from a single national-level victim-and-survivor-focused 24 witness, or core participant, and you only have one 25 single complainant who is represented throughout the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 entire strand. 2 So on timetabling we think there is a profound 3 problem. That's the first problem. 4 Secondly, we think there is a profound problem in 5 relation to the imbalance and the skewed nature of 6 the evidence. 7 The third problem which we highlight this morning 8 relates to a concern regarding black and minoritised 9 ethnic communities and a particular cultural gap. 10 Now, we have raised this. We raised this in 11 correspondence and in submissions to you previously, and 12 we have been told that those concerns will be addressed 13 in the evidence, and indeed you saw an attempt to do 14 that with Sheila Taylor on Day 2 when she was asked 15 about the Angelou Centre statement. Her frank response 16 was that she hadn't read it. She then gave a very 17 generalised answer in response to a question about BME 18 and where she referred to LGBTQ issues and other issues. 19 It seems to us that, in a situation where you have 20 a two-week hearing, we understand, although we are not 21 certain, that leaving aside the complainants whose 22 identities are protected, you will be hearing from 23 a large range of white witnesses. We are deeply 24 concerned that you are not hearing from any witnesses 25 with particular expertise in relation to black and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>
<p>1 minoritised ethnic victims of CSE, and that is 2 a profound gap, and we are deeply concerned about it. 3 They, in brief, are the key problems which we wish 4 to address you on today. There are other problems which 5 we recognise arising from the way in which this strand 6 of the inquiry has been approached, but we don't raise 7 those before you today simply because we recognise we 8 are where we are and we are mid hearing. 9 But when it comes to these particular issues, the 10 timetabling problem, the imbalance and the absence of an 11 effective way of looking at BME issues, we think there 12 is a ready way to address this, and we have, in our 13 letter yesterday, indicated a range of potential 14 solutions which you could look at. 15 Chair, I make this point about potential solutions 16 recognising that, of course, you and your team will have 17 additional information. You will know about witness 18 availability and other topics. So we make them as 19 a range of proposed solutions. Our core point is, there 20 is a fundamental problem here. It must be addressed, 21 and the credibility of this investigation is at stake as 22 matters stand. 23 Now, may I address first a possible solution which 24 was carved out earlier in the week, and that was the 25 decision on Day 2, mid hearing, to agree to adduce, at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 the end of the day, additional national-level evidence. 2 So at the very end of the day, a reference was made to 3 a large number of individuals, including those 4 I represent this morning, and extracts from their 5 statements were then to be uploaded to the website. 6 Now, this indicates precisely the problem because, 7 first of all, you look at the inquiry's public feed. 8 The inquiry's Twitter feed on that day said, "Now we are 9 hearing about some additional evidence". It made no 10 reference to what that evidence was. We went onto the 11 website that evening, on Day 2, to see where that 12 evidence was. Nowhere to be seen by 11.30 pm on Day 2. 13 Nowhere to be seen by 8.00 am on Day 3. It appeared at 14 some point yesterday during the hearing and the format 15 in which it appeared gives us profound concerns from an 16 open justice perspective, because the way it's appeared 17 is without any names. It doesn't say, "Here is the 18 evidence of Harriet Wistrich, here is the evidence of 19 Maggie Oliver". It simply gives a list of INQ numbers. 20 It looks like an extract from the log tables. It 21 doesn't have an index. The index which is provided, 22 which says that it is the material that was adduced on 23 Day 2 is the old list. It simply lists the evidence of 24 those who were always due to give evidence. 25 My clients see that as insulting and it makes quite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 clear that this was an after-thought, a tack-on and not 2 an appropriate way of dealing with national-level 3 noninstitutional core participants and not a way of 4 dealing with this profound gap in the national evidence. 5 So we say that solution isn't good enough. 6 In terms of the range of solutions we set out in the 7 letter, may I just flag in particular three that we 8 think should be considered seriously. 9 The first is, we ask that additional time be 10 scheduled to allow this hearing to run into a third 11 week, allowing more time to probe the national-level 12 witnesses in particular whom you have rammed into Day 9, 13 and allowing an opportunity for other voices to be 14 heard. So we ask that you allow extra time, and I am 15 asked to advance that you allocate a full additional 16 week and you find time to do it. 17 If a full week cannot be found, at the bare minimum, 18 we ask that Day 10 in this hearing, the last day of 19 evidence, when we will all be here, albeit virtually, we 20 ask that, instead of hearing closing submissions on that 21 day, that be converted to an additional day for 22 evidence. It will allow extra breathing space for those 23 Day 9 witnesses to be properly probed so we don't have 24 a rush in the way that we did on Day 2 with your counsel 25 having to make substantial efforts to get through a huge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 volume of material and long topic list in a time which 2 was simply too tight for it. And closing submissions 3 can then be made by those who wish to do it on a later 4 day. 5 In other strands of the inquiry you have done this. 6 You have done this in a wide range of other inquiries 7 where you have needed to find an additional day because 8 a witness overran or you needed to find an additional 9 day, or indeed an additional week, as you did in the 10 other religious institutions strand when technical 11 problems meant a two-week hearing needed to be converted 12 to a third week. 13 We ask you give us a third week. If you cannot give 14 us a third week, at least give us Day 10. 15 The second request is one or more of our clients are 16 called, even in a hot tub, to provide a counterpoint to 17 the institutional evidence and give us an ability to 18 contrast the published policy, the stated practice, the 19 corporate speak and the assertions with the reality of 20 practice for those on the ground who work directly with 21 victims and survivors. We can deal with the detail of 22 who they may be in writing later, rather than taking up 23 time this morning. But we ask that you do hear from at 24 least one of the national noninstitutional core 25 participants.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>
<p>1 Thirdly, we ask that you consider hearing from those 2 with particular expertise in relation to BME issues. 3 That can be done, ideally, through someone being called, 4 like Rosie Lewis from the Angelou Centre, but, at 5 a minimum, you should read their evidence into the 6 record. It is not good enough to upload it to the 7 website a day late under an INQ number which nobody can 8 follow. This is a public hearing, as Ms Sharpling said 9 yesterday, and it is imperative, we say, that this 10 material is at the forefront and that the inquiry does 11 what the inquiry has always said it will do, and have 12 victims and survivors at the core of its work. 13 For those reasons, we all say to you this is 14 a profound problem. We say that the inquiry has simply 15 got to grapple with this. We recognise, ideally, this 16 would have been done far earlier, potentially at 17 the January hearing, for example, although we didn't 18 have the timetable then, or earlier. But we have 19 listened to reassurances that this will be dealt with, 20 but as the hearing is playing out, I'm afraid none of us 21 feel that this inquiry, as currently constituted and as 22 currently proceeding, is doing justice to the victims 23 and survivors of the scourge of CSE within organised 24 networks. We think change is necessary. We have been 25 constructive and suggested some proposed ways that you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 could change. We are in your hands as to how you do it 2 but something simply must be done. I ask you that on 3 behalf of all the applicants this morning. Thank you. 4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Gallagher. Mr Jacobs, you will 5 have to be brief. 6 Submissions by MR JACOBS 7 MR JACOBS: Yes. I support the points that have been made 8 by Ms Gallagher, particularly in relation to the 9 proposal for Day 10. Jon Wedger and Maggie Oliver, my 10 clients, don't wish to cause any inconvenience to the 11 inquiry and are appreciative of the work that's been 12 undertaken by the legal team in investigating the 13 matters that they have devoted their lives to 14 confronting and exposing. However, they and all the 15 other noninstitutional national-level core participants 16 maintain that there is a fundamental imbalance in the 17 evidence within this investigation, and our concerns are 18 shared by Bristol City Council, for whose support in 19 this application we are grateful. We invite other 20 institutions who have a view on this matter to indicate 21 their view at the end of this application. 22 Chair, through Howe & Co, Maggie Oliver and 23 Jon Wedger have raised the matter with inquiry lawyers 24 back in April of this year. In correspondence, 25 Mr Enright drew the inquiry's attention to the lack of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 any proposal to hear from a countervailing alternative 2 perspective at the national level and to respond to and 3 contrast with those witnesses on the then draft 4 timetable. He made the point that, although 5 complainants would be providing a noninstitutional 6 voice, those witnesses do not have a detailed knowledge 7 of institutional proceedings and failings. 8 Chair, those who are giving evidence for 9 institutions are, in the main, corporate directors, 10 policy makers, senior police officers and strategic 11 directors. They will assist the inquiry from a purely 12 institutional perspective, but they are not involved 13 with victims of CSE on a daily basis, if at all. 14 Maggie Oliver, by contrast, and her staff at the 15 Maggie Oliver Foundation, have supported and assisted 16 1,522 survivors of CSE between June 2019 and July 2020. 17 Mr Wedger is in contact with approximately 15 to 20 18 victims every day. 19 That is what makes their evidence so important, and 20 that is why this evidence should be heard. You will 21 recall on Day 1 you heard submissions from 22 Ms Gallagher QC to the effect that there is 23 a significant gap between the evidential picture 24 presented by the institutions and the experiences on 25 victims of CSE on the ground. This is a matter which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 the inquiry must, at the very least, explore during the 2 hearing, if its findings and conclusions are to have an 3 evidential basis, a proper evidential basis. 4 For many years, for the public at large, the face 5 and voices of exploited children has been Maggie Oliver. 6 The Bafta award BBC drama "Three Girls", inspired by 7 Ms Oliver's work, shocked the nation in an awareness of 8 sexually-exploited children and the failure of 9 the police and others to protect them and, similarly, my 10 other client has 1 million new media followers who will 11 find it impossible to understand why you will hear 12 evidence from police forces who fail children but not 13 expert commentators and campaigners like him. 14 It is neither realistic nor reasonable for members 15 of the public to be expected to access extracts of 16 noninstitutional national-level core participant rule 9 17 statements from the inquiry website. 18 Chair, it is relevant to note that many CSE victims 19 will no doubt be following these proceedings. They may 20 also struggle to understand why those who can actually 21 inform the inquiry of their plight have not been called 22 upon to do so. With great respect, my clients say that 23 neither Ms Taylor nor Barnardo's have the necessary 24 independence from institutions to present the case from 25 the perspective of the ongoing victims.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>
<p>1 In the event that the inquiry accedes to our 2 application and is able to call evidence from 3 noninstitutional national-level core participants on 4 Day 10 or otherwise, I would suggest both my clients 5 give evidence together using the hot tub procedure. 6 Chair, you were faced with similar submissions in 7 the Nottinghamshire Council investigation. That 8 investigation was moving in the wrong direction because 9 the accounts of many victims were not going to be heard. 10 However, the issue was raised with you and, by the end 11 of the investigation, you had directed that the 12 summaries of all of the victims' accounts should be read 13 into the record. 14 Chair, the institutional witnesses did not dominate 15 proceedings in Nottingham because there was an 16 evidential counterpoint. The same consideration should 17 apply here, particularly as CSE is an ongoing and 18 evolving threat. 19 I therefore ask that you allow the application that 20 is now before you to permit evidence to be heard from 21 the noninstitutional national-level core participant 22 witnesses, and thereby ensure that not only is the 23 investigation conducted fairly, but that it is perceived 24 to have been conducted. 25 Chair, I have endeavoured to deal with my points</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 quickly. I hope that you could hear me and will take 2 them into account. 3 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Jacobs. We will now hear from 4 Ms Hill. 5 Submissions by MS HILL 6 MS HILL: Thank you, chair. You have heard submissions on 7 the time allocated to this hearing and on the balance of 8 the evidence being heard. We have also received 9 submissions, chair, as you know, from Bristol City 10 Council in writing and they agree with the need for the 11 inquiry to hear oral evidence from Independent 12 noninstitutional witnesses. They added in their 13 submissions, chair, that the inquiry would benefit from 14 hearing directly from survivors or other witnesses who 15 can give evidence based on their experience of working 16 with survivors. 17 Finally, Bristol Council raised that they thought 18 the Day 2 evidence was important, but that witnesses 19 were under too much pressure of time. 20 Chair, I will deal briefly, if I may, with each of 21 these groups of submissions in reverse order. Dealing, 22 first of all, with the submission about the pressure of 23 time on Day 2, chair, you will be fully aware of 24 the pressures that were in place on that day. We 25 understand the submission that is made by Bristol City</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 Council about the suggestion that CS-A12 and CS-A371 2 give evidence about their proposals to improve responses 3 to those affected by CSE. That hadn't been something in 4 their witness statements or raised on the topics lists, 5 but we are content to send some further requests to 6 those witnesses to see if they feel able to provide 7 further written evidence on those topics. 8 As far as the two academic witnesses are concerned, 9 they have said already that they will provide further 10 evidence in writing, and their statements and much of 11 the underlying evidence has already been adduced and 12 will be published on the inquiry's website. 13 On the wider question of balance, chair, you will be 14 aware that the broad purpose of the investigation is to 15 obtain evidence and make recommendations in respect of 16 ways in which institutions work to protect children from 17 child sexual exploitation by organised networks. In 18 order to explore this, chair, the selection has been 19 made of six geographical areas to examine in detail, as 20 I explained in my opening, and the inquiry has requested 21 evidence from the institutions in those areas. 22 It is important that that evidence is tested 23 properly, and this is why we have devoted a whole day to 24 each of those areas. 25 The inquiry is seeking to test the institutional</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 evidence by counsel to the inquiry questioning those 2 witnesses who give oral evidence, by seeking evidence 3 from victims and survivors in those areas, in 4 conjunction with a number of core participants and their 5 representatives, and obtaining evidence from 6 third-sector and campaigning groups in these areas, 7 again following suggestions from the core participants, 8 which is then being used to test the evidence of 9 institutional witnesses. 10 Examples of that include the Angelou Centre, 11 Changing Lives, the EYST, the Children's Society and 12 Voices from Care in Cymru, and also identifying, as you 13 know, chair, a number of specific cases involving 14 individual children in each of these areas in order to 15 test the institutional evidence and examine whether 16 their policies and procedures are replicated in 17 practice. 18 We are mindful of the need to ensure that the voices 19 and experiences of victims and survivors are heard by 20 the inquiry, and to this end, chair, as you know, the 21 inquiry encouraged victims and survivors from the six 22 relevant areas to give evidence. 23 It is perhaps understandable that the inquiry was 24 unable to identify any victim or survivor from one of 25 those areas who could give evidence on the themes we are</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>
<p>1 considering, given the very contemporaneous focus of 2 this investigation. There would have been significant 3 safeguarding issues if the inquiry had identified 4 witnesses who were able to give contemporaneous evidence 5 of their ongoing or very recent experiences and wished 6 to invite them to provide evidence. 7 However, chair, as you know, you will hear in-person 8 evidence from CS-A2 in relation to Warwickshire on 9 day 5, and she will give her perception as the mother of 10 a sexually-exploited child. 11 You will also recall that we were able to refer to 12 the experiences of several victims and survivors in our 13 opening. The inquiry has heard powerful evidence from 14 CS-A12 and CS-A371. These accounts are from different 15 geographical areas from the six under consideration, but 16 we hope that they have nevertheless provided you and the 17 panel with an appropriate context for the area-specific 18 evidence. 19 The inquiry has also sought evidence from a wide 20 range of noninstitutional witnesses. The volume of 21 evidence gathered means it would simply not have been 22 possible to call all of them to give live evidence and 23 we have selected five -- Dr Beckett, Dr Hallett, 24 Sheila Taylor of the NWG, Vikki McKenna of Catch22 and 25 Amanda Naylor of Barnardo's. These selections were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 based on a range of factors, including the relevance of 2 their written evidence to the investigation's stated 3 themes. In addition, we have taken into account the 4 fact that noninstitutional CPs are already represented 5 at the inquiry and so are able to suggest questions for 6 witnesses via the Rule 10 process and make opening and 7 closing statements. 8 This provides them with an opportunity to bring 9 their perspective to bear on the evidence that you will 10 hear. 11 Much of the remainder of the noninstitutional 12 witness evidence has been, or will be, published, 13 including the relevant parts of Ms Gallagher and 14 Mr Jacobs' and Mr Chapman's clients' statements. It is 15 not our position that this was a last-minute decision. 16 It is understood that there has been correspondence 17 indicating that the inquiry had proposed to adduce that 18 evidence. 19 Adducing it and publishing it in that way is no 20 reflection on the weight which should be given to the 21 evidence, and indeed we will take steps to ensure that, 22 where appropriate, relevant parts of it are put to the 23 institutional witnesses, and no doubt those responsible 24 for the website will have heard the submissions that 25 have been made about the way it is portrayed at the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 moment.</p> <p>2 Adducing evidence by publishing it is an important</p> <p>3 way of the inquiry ensuring that the evidence is</p> <p>4 available to both you, chair, and the members of</p> <p>5 the public who are following these proceedings. That</p> <p>6 evidence will, of course, be available to you in the</p> <p>7 course of writing your report.</p> <p>8 You have obviously heard submissions, chair, about</p> <p>9 reading some evidence from the witnesses who are</p> <p>10 represented. One other suggestion that we invite you to</p> <p>11 consider is whether or not to use some of the time that</p> <p>12 might be made available on the days where there are only</p> <p>13 two in-person witnesses, namely, today and Tuesday on</p> <p>14 Day 7. If you consider it appropriate, chair, to use</p> <p>15 that time to read some evidence, you may consider</p> <p>16 whether reading the timelines that have been prepared</p> <p>17 about the individual children in each area would be</p> <p>18 a good use of time and would be an appropriate and</p> <p>19 proportionate way of enabling the lived experiences of</p> <p>20 those children in the investigation's selected areas to</p> <p>21 be given more prominence.</p> <p>22 In relation to the suggestion that further witnesses</p> <p>23 be called to give oral evidence, of course, chair, this</p> <p>24 is a matter for you. You will, of course, need to take</p> <p>25 into account the logistical difficulties of doing so,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 especially in the context of a remote hearing, but,</p> <p>2 ultimately, it is a matter for you.</p> <p>3 Ultimately, of course, chair, the evidence that the</p> <p>4 inquiry hears and the way in which it is heard are</p> <p>5 matters for your judgment and discretion. You may</p> <p>6 consider that, in light of all the submissions you have</p> <p>7 heard, an appropriate balance has been struck between</p> <p>8 institutional and noninstitutional witnesses.</p> <p>9 The timetabling is also a matter for you. The</p> <p>10 inquiry has a busy programme of hearings across its 15</p> <p>11 investigations. Since the start of this calendar year,</p> <p>12 it has held six preliminary hearings and seven weeks of</p> <p>13 public hearings, notwithstanding the difficulties caused</p> <p>14 by the ongoing pandemic.</p> <p>15 While Ms Gallagher refers to further time being</p> <p>16 found for other hearings, there were specific situations</p> <p>17 in each case that required additional hearing time. As</p> <p>18 you will recall, for the Accountability and Reparations</p> <p>19 hearing, a key witness was unavailable due to the</p> <p>20 preelection period when a general election was</p> <p>21 unexpectedly called last year. For the Roman Catholic</p> <p>22 investigation, again, a key witness was unable to attend</p> <p>23 due to ill-health. And for the CPIROS hearing earlier</p> <p>24 this hearing, additional time was required because you</p> <p>25 accepted that key witnesses were unable to attend to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>
<p>1 give evidence in May due to the pandemic.</p> <p>2 In all instances, the need for additional time was</p> <p>3 unavoidable and came at significant cost and disruption</p> <p>4 to the inquiry and core participants. Chair, you will</p> <p>5 be aware you have an obligation to act fairly but also</p> <p>6 with regard to the need to avoid unnecessary cost.</p> <p>7 In conclusion, chair, you may accept that the issues</p> <p>8 raised by this investigation could occupy many more days</p> <p>9 of hearing time, but, ultimately, a balance has to be</p> <p>10 struck and the evidence focused, and it is a matter for</p> <p>11 you to decide, chair, whether the correct balance has</p> <p>12 been struck between the constraints I have set out and</p> <p>13 the need to test the most relevant evidence, and it is</p> <p>14 for you to consider the suggestions made by core</p> <p>15 participants and the additional suggestion that I have</p> <p>16 made in response.</p> <p>17 Chair, those are all the observations I wish to</p> <p>18 make.</p> <p>19 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. I will, of course, consider</p> <p>20 the submissions that have been made and make my decision</p> <p>21 and I will ask the investigation lawyer to provide it to</p> <p>22 core participants as soon as possible.</p> <p>23 I think we will now require a few minutes' break to</p> <p>24 make the arrangements for hearing the first witness of</p> <p>25 the day.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 MS HILL: That's right, chair.</p> <p>2 THE CHAIR: We will return at 10.45 am.</p> <p>3 (10.35 am)</p> <p>4 (A short break)</p> <p>5 (11.03 am)</p> <p>6 THE CHAIR: Before we hear from the first witness, I want to</p> <p>7 say that, further to earlier submissions, I will</p> <p>8 consider, of course, everything that has been said.</p> <p>9 Nevertheless, we want to immediately enhance the focus</p> <p>10 on the victim experience, so I will take up Ms Hill's</p> <p>11 suggestion of hearing the timeline of individual</p> <p>12 children's cases, beginning with Swansea. So please go</p> <p>13 ahead to read this to us, Mr Livingston.</p> <p>14 Summary of timeline of WITNESS CS-A24 (read)</p> <p>15 MR LIVINGSTON: Thank you, chair. This timeline is at</p> <p>16 reference INQ006147. It doesn't need to be brought up</p> <p>17 on screen, but it will be published in full.</p> <p>18 First of all, chair, with CS-A24.</p> <p>19 During 2018, CS-A24 was diagnosed with ADHD and</p> <p>20 a conduct disorder. There was a reported family history</p> <p>21 of alcohol and domestic abuse. She was considered to be</p> <p>22 at high risk of sexual exploitation for a short period</p> <p>23 during 2018.</p> <p>24 Between 2016 and 2018, numerous referrals were made</p> <p>25 to children's social care. CS-A24 alleged her mother</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 was hitting her. There were missing episodes and 2 allegations of bullying at school. Prevention services 3 were put in place.</p> <p>4 In May 2018, aged 14, a CSE coordinator raised 5 concerns that when CS-A24 was missing, this was not 6 being reported. She was reported to be frequenting the 7 address of an adult female with other missing children 8 and adult males present.</p> <p>9 In June 2018, a risk of sexual exploitation of 10 CS-A24 was identified. She had an overnight missing 11 episode and returned home under the influence of drugs. 12 She told her mother that she had bought the drugs from 13 a 37-year-old woman. She was referred to an agency 14 supporting young people who take drugs.</p> <p>15 In June 2018, a CSE risk assessment graded A24 as 16 being at high risk. There were noted to be missing 17 episodes and it was described in the document that the 18 child had an older "boyfriend" who was controlling her. 19 CS-A24 was using and purchasing drugs, it was noted. 20 Concerns were expressed that she may be "taken advantage 21 of sexually". She was also noted to be associating with 22 a number of males who might place her at risk. CS-A24 23 had disclosed that from the age of 11 years old, she had 24 five or six, as she put it, "sexual partners". The 25 young males involved in this reported harmful sexual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 behaviour were aged 11 to 16 years old. A24 had 2 disclosed further incidents of harmful sexual behaviour 3 involving herself and children of her own age. It was 4 reported that she had distributed nude pictures of 5 herself in 2016, when aged 12, and she was referred to 6 children's social care for this reason.</p> <p>7 In July 2018, it was noted that CS-A24 had recently 8 been diagnosed with ADHD and conduct disorder and 9 medication was prescribed.</p> <p>10 Also in that month, a meeting called a child in need 11 mapping meeting and a strategy meeting took place. It 12 was reported that A24 had previously told her mother 13 that she had "been with" Romanian men and that she might 14 disappear and neither the police nor children's social 15 care would be able to find her. She was placed on the 16 CSE Protocol. Barnardo's began to work with the child.</p> <p>17 In August 2018, one month later, CS-A24 was removed 18 from the CSE Protocol. Her school attendance was 19 reported to be 52 per cent. She had attended some CSE 20 safety sessions but engagement was noted to be sporadic. 21 A24 was said to not fully understand the risk of being 22 groomed.</p> <p>23 In November 2018, a multi-agency meeting was held. 24 A24, aged 14 by this point, had been arrested in October 25 for assault at a house party. Her "boyfriend" was noted</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>
<p>1 to be a violent young offender. It was noted that she 2 had attended three of 13 appointments with drugs support 3 workers. Her school attendance remained poor, although 4 her behaviour was said to have improved. Youth services 5 and the under-18s drugs service, it was noted, were 6 planning to terminate contact with A24 after one final 7 session with her.</p> <p>8 Chair, that timeline is taken from the documents 9 about that witness. I now move on to A25.</p> <p>10 Summary of timeline of WITNESS CS-A25 (read) 11 MR LIVINGSTON: A25 was on the child protection register 12 several times and had multiple missing episodes. The 13 evidence suggests that her childhood involved family 14 violence, alcohol abuse, lack of care and neglect and 15 that A25 was considered to be at risk of sexual 16 exploitation between August 2018 and November 2018. She 17 became a looked-after child from January 2019.</p> <p>18 In March 2017, A25 alleged assault by her mother and 19 went to stay with her paternal grandmother. Several 20 strategy meetings were convened following reports of 21 harmful sexual behaviour involving her and a 12-year-old 22 male. She was also aged 12 at this time.</p> <p>23 This was recorded as a crime because both children 24 were under the age of consent, and, in fact, under the 25 age of 13. The families of the children were spoken to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 by children's social care and the police. There were 2 concerns expressed that A25 might be pregnant. There 3 were several missing episodes, including one where A25 4 went missing from hospital, where she had been admitted 5 overnight following a suspected overdose. She was taken 6 by police to her maternal grandmother's house outside 7 Swansea. Agencies noted concerns about this 8 grandmother, who was known to misuse drugs. It was 9 thought that her address was used by drug users and was 10 not considered a safe place for A25. A25's mother 11 reportedly did not want her to remain in Swansea because 12 of continuing harmful sexual behaviour with the other 13 child.</p> <p>14 In April 2017, still aged 12, A25 was taken into 15 police protection, having refused to stay at her 16 grandmother's or with her mother. She disclosed that 17 she may have been sexually abused by her father since 18 the age of 5 or 6. A strategy discussion took place and 19 it was agreed that children's social care would follow 20 up the child's disclosures.</p> <p>21 Between September 2017 and April 2018, aged 13, A25 22 was placed on the Child Protection Register under the 23 category of emotional abuse. Her father was imprisoned 24 for a serious domestic violence offence.</p> <p>25 In July 2018, a SERAF risk assessment was conducted</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 for A25 and A25 was considered to be at high risk of 2 sexual exploitation. The assessment noted that family 3 relationships had broken down and the child was moving 4 between her mother and her grandmother's home. Her 5 father had been released from prison and was living in 6 the grandmother's home. The assessment recorded that 7 A25 was associating with other girls at risk of sexual 8 exploitation and noted repeated overnight missing 9 episodes and that she had been with older adults at 10 parties where drugs were supplied and taken.</p> <p>11 In August 2018, a strategy meeting and child 12 protection meeting were held. A25 was placed on the 13 CSE Protocol. Concerns were expressed about whether she 14 was safe with her parents. A residential placement was 15 noted to be under consideration.</p> <p>16 In September 2018, a child protection meeting was 17 held. It was noted that the family had not engaged 18 since the last core group meeting. It was noted that 19 A25 was unable to stay with any of her relatives and 20 that an emergency placement was being considered.</p> <p>21 Also that month, A25 was noted, or recorded, to have 22 been out with friends under the influence of alcohol. 23 She was aged 14 at this point. She reported harmful 24 sexual behaviour, including digital penetration, by 25 three boys in a field. She was brought home by the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 father of one of the boys. An ABE interview was carried 2 out with the child and two males were arrested and 3 subsequently released with no further action taken.</p> <p>4 In October 2018, it was noted that A25 had attended 5 a CAMHS appointment, but it was reported that neither 6 A25 nor her family were engaging with children's 7 Social Services. The need for a residential placement 8 was again noted to be being considered.</p> <p>9 In November 2018, it was reported that CAMHS had 10 concerns that A25 might be displaying neurodevelopmental 11 traits. It was recorded that she potentially had autism 12 but a referral from the school was said to be required. 13 Her school attendance was very poor. A CSE strategy 14 meeting considered that she no longer met the threshold 15 and she was removed from the CSE Protocol.</p> <p>16 In January 2019, A25 was in a temporary foster 17 placement to keep her safe, following injuries when she 18 and her mother were fighting. Her father was recalled 19 to prison after further domestic violence.</p> <p>20 In February 2019, it was noted that an attempt had 21 been made to return A25 to her family. She was noted to 22 be living with her mother and other relatives in 23 rotation.</p> <p>24 In March 2019, A25 was recorded to be with 25 a short-term foster carer. Approval had been given to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>
<p>1 an eight-week placement which was being sought, to be 2 reviewed in April. A25 was engaging with therapy and 3 a family intervention worker.</p> <p>4 In October 2019, A25 was listed in a police 5 vulnerability report as being at risk of sexual 6 exploitation at her mother's address.</p> <p>7 Chair, that concludes the timeline for A25.</p> <p>8 Summary of timeline of WITNESS CS-A220 (read)</p> <p>9 MR LIVINGSTON: Moving on to A220. The evidence suggests 10 that CS-A220 was sexually abused from the age of 15 11 until after her 18th birthday.</p> <p>12 In February 2017, A220 was the subject of an initial 13 CSE meeting, aged 15 at this point.</p> <p>14 In September 2017, aged 16, A220 reported two rapes 15 in the last two weeks and a further four rapes in the 16 four years up to September 2017. She said that, until 17 that point, she was too frightened to provide further 18 details; that she had been too frightened in the past to 19 provide further details. A child protection medical 20 undertaken showed an adult bite mark, lighter burns and 21 other non-accidental bruising on her. A220 was placed 22 in a residential home.</p> <p>23 Also that month, police noted evidence that A220 was 24 encouraged to send indecent images of herself to 25 a 20-year-old male and that he was using controlling</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 behaviour against her. It was noted that the male was 2 being held in custody.</p> <p>3 A child placement report stated that A220 feared for 4 her life and did not report abuse because of fears for 5 herself and her siblings. That month, a CSE meeting 6 agreed that A220 was not safe and a foster placement 7 should be found.</p> <p>8 The next month, in October 2017, A220 was assessed 9 by CAMHS and recorded to be displaying signs of anxiety 10 and depression and medication was recommended. 11 Barnardo's reported that some of the behaviours being 12 demonstrated by other children in her residential 13 placement were triggering trauma responses that were 14 distressing and frightening for her. Swansea Council 15 requested that her residential placement come to an end 16 and that A220 be placed in foster care.</p> <p>17 Over 2019, when A220 was aged between 17 and 18, the 18 alleged perpetrator of the sexual exploitation of A220 19 was identified and found to be a registered sex offender 20 living in Bristol. South Wales Police liaised with 21 Avon and Somerset Police and the alleged perpetrator was 22 arrested for rape. It was noted that he was recalled to 23 prison and remained on bail pending further 24 investigations.</p> <p>25 In August 2019, when aged 18, A220 was given an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 out-of-area care leaver placement. Support from police 2 and children's social care continued beyond her 18th 3 birthday. 4 Chair, I am now moving to A56. 5 Summary of timeline of WITNESS CS-A56 (read) 6 MR LIVINGSTON: A56 was a looked-after child in the care of 7 Swansea Council. The evidence suggests she was 8 trafficked to other parts of the country and sexually 9 exploited by organised criminal gangs at the age of 17. 10 In March 2018, approximately, when aged 17, evidence 11 suggests that A56's phone number was given by her mother 12 to drug dealers and was passed on to several gangs, who 13 contacted her and sexually exploited her in different 14 parts of the country. A56 was placed on the 15 CSE Protocol until her 18th birthday. 16 In August 2018, children's social care arranged 17 a specialist leaving care placement outside of Wales, 18 located where continuity of support could be provided. 19 At an unknown date, when aged 18, A56 decided to 20 return to Swansea. She was assisted to find suitable 21 supported housing and enhanced support was provided. 22 In December 2018, it was noted that A56 had recently 23 terminated a relationship with a very controlling male 24 who used her for substances, and that she was collected 25 one night by taxi from her flat and taken to an address</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 in another city where she was sexually exploited for the 2 whole of the night by a known gang member in exchange 3 for cocaine. She disclosed to the police that she had 4 been trafficked and sexually exploited and that the 5 alleged perpetrator still had the key to her flat. She 6 was recorded to have been very afraid of the gangs who 7 were frequently in her flat during the day. She said 8 that if the police were to go to her flat and the gangs 9 thought that she had told the police about them, they 10 would physically hurt her. A56 was recorded as living 11 a life of fear and that she did not know how to get out 12 of this. 13 Chair, finally, A221. 14 Summary of timeline of WITNESS CS-A221 (read) 15 MR LIVINGSTON: The evidence suggests that A221 was groomed 16 by a registered sex offender. In May 2019, when aged 17 14, A221 went missing. He was found in another part of 18 Wales with a registered sex offender. 19 In June 2019, a SERAF risk assessment was carried 20 out. A221 was assessed as being at high risk of sexual 21 exploitation. It was noted that his family had been 22 befriended by a registered sex offender who had given 23 A221 and his mother gifts, and that A221's parents and 24 grandmother knew that the male had served a prison 25 sentence but did not disclose this to social workers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>
<p>1 In June 2019 also, a CSE strategy meeting was held. 2 A221 was noted as having previously been on the Child 3 Protection Register because of domestic violence and 4 parental alcohol misuse. It was reported that his 5 parents had been going backwards and forwards to the 6 offender's home and that he had frequented their home. 7 The social worker was unaware of concerns and did not 8 complete checks because the offender was thought to be 9 a vulnerable adult. The child had not disclosed any 10 sexual abuse or grooming and had refused a sexual health 11 screening. After the offender appeared in court, A221 12 said he hated it that the offender had "done this" to 13 other people. His attendance at school was recorded to 14 be good, and he was noted to be quiet and compliant, 15 making every effort in class. The strategy meeting was 16 told that the police had information that, in 2014, five 17 years previously, another known sex offender had been 18 transporting the child and his siblings to and from 19 a church group. The child was recorded to be engaging 20 with sexual exploitation workers and to have been placed 21 on the CSE Protocol. The offender was sentenced to 22 24 months in prison for a breach of a Sexual Harm 23 Prevention Order. 24 Chair, that concludes the evidence to be read in 25 about the individual children's cases. I understand</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 there is a similar timeline for each of the areas, and 2 I think that we intend to start with Durham at the end 3 of today, as their evidence was yesterday, and then, on 4 an ongoing basis, to read that timeline each day, with 5 your permission, chair. 6 THE CHAIR: Yes, that's correct, thank you very much, 7 Mr Livingston. Ms Hill? 8 MS HILL: Thank you, chair. Our next witness, please, is 9 Julie Thomas from Swansea Children's Services. 10 MS JULIE THOMAS (affirmed) 11 Examination by MS HILL 12 MS HILL: You are Julie Thomas, head of children's services 13 at Swansea Social Services; is that right? 14 A. Yes, it is. 15 Q. You have provided the inquiry with two witness 16 statements. I am going to read out the URNs, please: 17 SCC000570 and SCC000571. You are also here to give 18 evidence of the material that's been set out in 19 Damian Rees's witness statements, which are SCC000550 20 and SCC000567. Are those statements true, to the best 21 of your knowledge and belief? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. Thank you, Ms Thomas. I am going to ask you some 24 questions following the topics list that you have been 25 sent, although I may jump around some of the themes,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 depending on the time that we have. You will also, as 2 you know, be asked some questions about the particular 3 children's cases that you have just heard summarised. 4 If, at any point, you can't hear me or don't follow the 5 question, please let me know, and please do remember the 6 restrictions orders that are in place around the 7 children. 8 I will ask you questions from now until around 9 12 o'clock and we will take a short break and then ask 10 you some more questions before lunch and that should 11 conclude your evidence. Is that all right? 12 A. Yes, thank you. 13 Q. Chair, can I formally adduce the statements the URNs for 14 which I just read out? Thank you. 15 Ms Thomas, by way of background, you are a qualified 16 social worker registered with Social Care Wales and 17 you're currently head of the service employed by the 18 City and County of Swansea Social Services Department. 19 You have been employed in your current post 20 since May 2015 and employed by the City and County of 21 Swansea since March 2010; is that right? 22 A. Yes, it is. 23 Q. The first topic I would like to deal with, please, is 24 what we are calling theme 2, which is that of empathy 25 and concern for child victims. Can I bring up, please,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 on screen, SCC000550, internal page 11, paragraph 54. 2 This is part of the witness statement from Mr Rees that 3 was first given to the inquiry, addressing a range of 4 topics. If we can scroll in, please, on paragraphs 54 5 to the end of the page, that would be helpful. Broadly, 6 Ms Thomas, is this right, that in this part of his 7 evidence, Mr Rees sets out various initiatives that the 8 council has taken to try and identify and respond to 9 victim-blaming language? 10 A. Yes, it does. 11 Q. Do you want to tell us a little bit, please, about the 12 training that is given to staff on this issue? 13 A. Yes. I mean, you know, the evidence states that, within 14 the documentation, there are implications, you know, 15 that children have been compliant or responsible for the 16 exploitation that they suffer. We absolutely accept 17 that that is not appropriate language. 18 It also leads, I think, professionals up a blind 19 alley in terms of their ability then to robustly 20 identify, assess and respond to children. So, you know, 21 this has been an area of focus for us, and we have 22 adopted, since March 2019, the professional guidance, 23 which is in my bundle, "The Language in Child and 24 Adolescent Vulnerability: A Guide for Practitioners, 25 Professionals and Partner Agencies".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>
<p>1 Q. Before you bring that up, Ms Thomas, it is SCC000431. 2 In fairness, in Mr Rees's witness statement, he also 3 talks about a similar document provided by the 4 Children's Society? 5 A. Yes, it is based on -- with the Children's Society. So 6 that was published in 2018. It certainly highlighted to 7 us some of the issues we were experiencing across the 8 multi-agency partnership group. 9 So we have subsequently employed a practice lead for 10 child exploitation and also enhanced the service with 11 a senior social work practitioner, and their job is 12 to -- part of their role is to roll out the guidance and 13 quality assure, going forward, the strategy meetings to 14 ensure that we are compliant with that guidance. 15 I would say, you know, we have made progress, and 16 I think if you look at the SERAF risk assessment form at 17 SCC000436 -- 18 Q. Can I just cut across you? Forgive me. We will be 19 looking at the risk assessment forms. Can I just deal 20 with this guide before we take this down? Can I ask 21 you, Danny, to scroll through this guide. This is 22 a little bit of detail for the panel before you continue 23 with that part of your evidence. If you look at 24 internal page 3, the guide broadly sets out on a table 25 examples of poorly worded responses, and then examples</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 of more appropriate language. So there are common 2 phrases here. On the left-hand side, "putting 3 themselves at risk"; at the bottom, "would not 4 co-operate with"; over the page, describing the child as 5 "missing"; the child having sexual activity or being 6 sexually active with. Perhaps particularly for this 7 investigation, if you go, please, to internal page 7, 8 Danny, an example of a poorly worded response around 9 group-based harm is that the "child is associating or 10 spending time with elders" and there are alternative 11 uses of language that are suggested. 12 You were, I think, about to say -- you can take that 13 down now, Danny -- that the SERAF risk assessment form 14 that we will look at, does that have relevance to this 15 issue that you wanted to deal with now? 16 A. Yes. I suppose we have focused, we have circulated that 17 document throughout the service -- not the SERAF risk 18 assessment, the guidance for professionals -- and it's 19 embedded -- that's embedded in multi-agency training. 20 So we have already trained on that. 21 As you may be aware, we are going live on the 22 contextual safeguarding pilot in October, and that will 23 be reinforced -- we will have the opportunity, because 24 there's multi-agency training involved in that pilot, 25 in October there will be opportunities to reinforce</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

1 **that.**
 2 Q. Without needing to bring it back up, I think this is
 3 right, isn't it, that in Mr Rees's first statement, as
 4 part of the wider issue of empathy and concern for child
 5 victims, he summarised at paragraphs 61 through to 69 --
 6 in fact, we can bring it up. SCC000550_012. He has
 7 summarised a series of partner agencies who work
 8 directly, I think, in this field in the Swansea area,
 9 focusing in particular on support for local black and
 10 minority and ethnic communities. Is that right?
 11 **A. Yes.**
 12 Q. I think we can see reference in SCC000550_012 to the
 13 Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team, from whom
 14 I think we have evidence, and also the Black and Asian
 15 Women's Step-out Group, and then there is reference to
 16 the support given to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans,
 17 questioning community by the YMCA in Swansea.
 18 Just scroll in, please, on paragraph 69 on the
 19 second page, Danny. The indications given there are, at
 20 present, there is no support in Swansea specifically
 21 with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning young
 22 people experiencing sexual exploitation. Is there
 23 anything in hand to address that or do you think the
 24 position will remain as it is?
 25 **A. No. We currently have a case where those issues are**

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1 **involved in has supported us to identify the**
 2 **relationships within those peer groups and the influence**
 3 **that some young people have over other young people.**
 4 **But that, of course, does not make -- you know, what we**
 5 **understand is that those young people who have the**
 6 **power -- more power and influence within that group are**
 7 **still vulnerable young people and their welfare needs**
 8 **also need to be considered, and their safety, and they**
 9 **may also be at risk of exploitation from adults.**
 10 Q. May I ask you to look at a document from the EYST group
 11 that I have mentioned already. Can I bring up, please,
 12 the statement of Shehla Khan: INQ005914_001, internal
 13 paragraph 2, please. I think you have had a chance to
 14 look at this witness statement, where Ms Khan says, at
 15 paragraph 2:
 16 "We are confident that there are many more in the
 17 community which are under-reported. The shame and guilt
 18 factors stop families and BAME girls from coming
 19 forward. The BAME females don't have enough safe spaces
 20 where they feel confident to go and report and discuss
 21 these issues."
 22 Do you have a view on that, insofar as it affects
 23 Swansea?
 24 **A. Yes. I mean, the figures show that there are low**
 25 **numbers of BAME young people who -- where child**

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1 **prevalent and we are developing tools to support that**
 2 **young person, and it will be incorporated into the work**
 3 **around contextual safeguarding.**
 4 Q. You have been provided, I think, Ms Thomas, with some
 5 evidence from Amanda Naylor from Barnardo's. Have you
 6 had a chance to read that evidence?
 7 **A. I have, but I can't say that it is the most familiar**
 8 **document.**
 9 Q. Perhaps I will just bring up -- I can just read it out.
 10 There is one short paragraph in it. To assist you, what
 11 she does is provide evidence about a series of
 12 geographical areas within the country, one of which is
 13 Swansea, because of the role of Barnardo's, Better
 14 Futures in particular. She says this at paragraph 13 --
 15 BRD000277_006:
 16 "Previously, there had been concerns that vulnerable
 17 older children were being viewed and discussed as
 18 perpetrators of CSE, and not considered as victims or at
 19 risk of exploitation in their own right. This having
 20 been raised as an issue, improvement in victim blaming
 21 has been noted."
 22 Do you want to comment on that?
 23 **A. Yes. Again, the contextual safeguarding work has**
 24 **supported a better understanding of peer exploitation,**
 25 **and, you know, I suppose the peer mapping that we are**

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1 **exploitation has been identified as an issue. We are**
 2 **acutely aware of that. We have a culturally harmful**
 3 **behaviour worker that sits now with our practice lead**
 4 **and senior social work practitioner for child**
 5 **exploitation.**
 6 **We have relatively good community cohesion within**
 7 **Swansea. We have very positive working relationships**
 8 **with EYST, who Shehla Khan works for, and very good**
 9 **relationships with community safety.**
 10 **We are also starting to work with schools who have**
 11 **high indices of BAME children and, again, the contextual**
 12 **safeguarding work is helping us think not just about --**
 13 **so it is helping us think about the importance of place**
 14 **in Swansea, and unsafe places and the importance of**
 15 **identifying unsafe places, but also the importance of**
 16 **identifying safe places where young people can develop**
 17 **trusted relationships. That is across the board,**
 18 **obviously, but particularly keen to develop some**
 19 **thinking around this for BAME. That's why we are**
 20 **working closely with schools in our area.**
 21 Q. Can I ask you to look, please, at paragraph 12 of her
 22 statement. Internal page 3, please, of this document.
 23 At paragraph 12, what's said here is that there is
 24 a concern, if you look at the latter part of this
 25 paragraph, that staff working within statutory

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<p>1 organisations are insufficiently ethnically diverse and 2 so have lacked cultural diversity understanding. She 3 recommends an increase in representation within staff in 4 those organisations. Do you want to provide an answer 5 to that? 6 A. Well, we would obviously agree with that. You would 7 understand the challenges that children's social care 8 have recruiting generally. In Swansea, we have 9 a relatively stable workforce, but nationally it is an 10 issue, and we would most certainly be attracting 11 a broader range of cultural diversity and ethnic 12 diversity within our workforce, and we have recently 13 reviewed our workforce well-being strategy, and that 14 will be included in it, how we attract a wider range of 15 ethnicity within our workforce. 16 Q. Finally on this document, can you look at paragraph 5 on 17 the previous page, please, internal page 2. Ms Khan 18 makes the point that generic services exist such as 19 those run by the NSPCC but there is insufficient 20 targeting and focus on the BAME community and current 21 services are not culturally appropriate. She makes the 22 point that the BAWSO's services support adult victims 23 but are not accessible for younger people or children 24 and overall there is little focus on males either as 25 potential victims or potential perpetrators.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 So it seems to be suggesting that there is 2 insufficient support available specifically for young 3 people and children from the BAME communities or indeed 4 for male victims. Do you want to respond to that? 5 A. I think we have very good, strong, powerful working 6 relationships with EYST. We use them on a very regular 7 basis and they are definitely culturally appropriate. 8 In relation to male victims, again, that's a theme 9 across the board, it doesn't just relate to BAME, and we 10 are acutely aware of the challenges for young people, 11 for young males, to disclose information, worrying 12 information, to professionals around this particular 13 issue. Again, that relates back to providing young 14 males to develop trusted relationships and safe spaces 15 for them, and I think also improvement in terms of our 16 understanding and identification, early identification 17 and prevention to support young males to manage to 18 understand that they are being exploited, and we are 19 also -- again, the contextual safeguarding pilot is 20 helping us look more widely at child exploitation and 21 criminal exploitation, not just CSE. 22 That doesn't mean to say in any way that we are 23 diminishing the focus on CSE, but we do believe that 24 that focus -- that wider brief on criminal exploitation 25 will enable us to identify more males who are at risk of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>
<p>1 sexual exploitation. 2 Q. I will have some more questions about our theme 3 specifically of male victims, but can I deal with some 4 further points now around language by looking at some of 5 the papers from one of the cases, one of the children's 6 cases. It is CS-A24, whose -- the timeline about that 7 child was read out by Mr Livingston. 8 This child has documentation in our file relating to 9 a period of time in 2018, so just over two years ago. 10 Can I ask, please, to be brought up on screen 11 SCC000530_003. If we can scroll in on the top part of 12 this page, under the heading "Vulnerabilities 13 identified". There are a series of observations made 14 about the breakdown of her family relationships, family 15 history of domestic abuse, family history of substance 16 abuse, family history of mental health difficulties. 17 Noted that her mum was reported here as having anxiety. 18 Mum says she is depressed through the death of her mum 19 nine years ago. Then under this heading "Low 20 self-esteem", it says: 21 "CS-A24 has admitted to five or six sexual partners 22 since the age of 11, aged 11-16, and also admitted to 23 staff on a residential event that she has given oral sex 24 to males of her age." 25 Would you accept that the use of the phrase "sexual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 partners since the age of 11" wasn't an appropriate use 2 of language? 3 A. Yes, absolutely we would accept that, and that's why, 4 you know, we have circulated the professional guidance. 5 That's why we have had a focus on multi-agency training 6 and awareness of the importance of language, and the 7 practice lead, of course, for child sexual exploitation 8 will challenge that in meetings. 9 Q. Can I just show you a couple more documents, please, and 10 then ask you some questions about these specific 11 documents? 12 A. I just wondered, sorry, if it was worth mentioning that, 13 you know, there are wider societal issues about language 14 around sexual abuse, around rape of women, that are well 15 entrenched, aren't they, within society? And that's not 16 right, but it certainly has become -- the professional 17 language sometimes early on, due to a lack of awareness. 18 I think we are in a very different position now. But 19 that culture, you know, that culture, that use of 20 professional language that has been accepted for many 21 years takes time, and it takes persistence, and I think 22 we have that in Swansea, and we have an absolute 23 commitment to showing empathy to victims, and I think 24 there are examples of that within the documentation when 25 we have talked about older people grooming young people</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 and them being controlled, and that they were feeling 2 frightened and scared. 3 So, you know, there is evidence that there is change 4 within that area, and we are pleased to see it. 5 I think, you know, the documents that I referred to 6 earlier, in terms of the SERAF form and the child sexual 7 exploitation meeting at 518 and 436, demonstrate that 8 shift. 9 Q. Can I take you to a further document completed 10 in July 2018 about CS-A24. It is SCC000532. This is, 11 I think, a completed -- 12 A. I'm sorry to cut across you. If it would help, because 13 I know that there are pressures of time, I have noted 14 that document -- 15 Q. If I can just put the two references to you and then ask 16 you how they would be dealt with now. These are 17 from July 2018. If you look, please, at internal page 4 18 under the heading "What is working well?", if you scroll 19 in on the middle of that page, this child is referred to 20 in this way: 21 "CS-A24 is known to have been sexually active from 22 a very young age. Has potentially had six or seven 23 partners since she was 11 years old." 24 Pause there and let me give one more reference to 25 you. Can we look at SCC000534.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 A. I'm sorry, I'm having trouble with my glasses, seeing 2 some of -- 3 Q. Go, please, to internal page 9. This is about the same 4 child. If we scroll in at the very bottom under the 5 heading "Danger statement 4 -- boundaries and routines", 6 one can see at the very end of this paragraph: 7 "If mum is not able to put routines and boundaries 8 in place for CS-A24, child may continue to make unsafe 9 decisions that place herself, her mum, her brother and 10 sister and others at risk of harm." 11 You have no doubt noted these documents while 12 preparing for your evidence -- 13 A. What I would say is -- 14 Q. Can I put the question to you, Ms Thomas, first, please? 15 How can we be confident that that sort of language would 16 be challenged in future? 17 A. I think I've indicated why we would be confident, 18 because we are following the professional guidance 19 document, and the practice lead for child sexual 20 exploitation is responsible for the awareness raising 21 and training around that document, and she chairs the 22 child sexual exploitation meetings. 23 So what we are doing is encouraging professionals 24 when they use that language to reframe those phrases in 25 line with that guidance. So we would be expecting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>
<p>1 people to be saying that the child is vulnerable to 2 being sexually exploited; that the young person says, 3 you know, that they are in a relationship with a person 4 and there are concerns about that person's age; the 5 imbalance of power, exploitation and/or offending. So 6 we are moving away from that victim blaming and clearly 7 talking about perpetrators and the perpetration of 8 sexual exploitation. 9 Q. What checks are done by the council to ensure that those 10 improvements are embedded in practice? 11 A. Okay, that's a good question. The practice lead for 12 sexual exploitation has overview of all cases open in 13 Swansea relating to that theme, and she will quality 14 assure the documents and she will pull out themes that 15 then go to the strategic meeting which is chaired by our 16 safeguarding coordinator. 17 Q. Can I ask you to look, please, at paragraph 54 of 18 Mr Rees's first statement, SCC000550_011. This is where 19 he explains that there have been examples of 20 victim-blaming language used within the organisation. 21 Can you give an indication of how many times or how 22 frequently such incidents of inappropriate language have 23 occurred and been challenged? 24 A. I think that goes back, doesn't it, to my comments about 25 the use -- the acceptance of this language more broadly.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 Now, in Swansea, I think I have explained that we have 2 a persistent approach. I can't give you the detail of 3 how many times. I would say that, in my notes -- and 4 they relate to document 532 -- that I have commented 5 that, you know, our paperwork has been littered with 6 language such as that, and it is not acceptable. It 7 certainly hampers our -- as I said, it does lead 8 professionals down a blind alley and causes problems for 9 us then in terms of the focus of the assessment, the 10 quality of the analysis and the quality of the safety 11 planning, because what we come up with in our safety 12 plans is, "Child X has to return home at 10.30", you 13 know. How are we going to achieve that? We have to 14 think about it and put it, and the language within that 15 guidance helps us think about sexual exploitation in 16 a more contextual setting. 17 So we would want to know, where is that young person 18 when she leaves the house at 5.30 of an afternoon and 19 she's supposed to be back by 9.30? Nobody knows where 20 she is and she doesn't come back until 10.30. She may 21 have been reported missing to the police in that period 22 of time. 23 So that focus -- that broader focus now on safe 24 places and safe places -- on place and on peer groups 25 within those places, helps us to develop more robust</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 safety plans.</p> <p>2 So we would want to know, what friendships has she</p> <p>3 got – has that young person got – I'm saying "she"</p> <p>4 because in Swansea, predominantly, it has been "she",</p> <p>5 although we accept there may be a bigger issue with</p> <p>6 males.</p> <p>7 Q. I'm sorry to cut across you. I'm quite keen to stick to</p> <p>8 the structure of the questions. I would like to move,</p> <p>9 in fact, anyway, to the theme of male victims and</p> <p>10 disabled victims, but you will be giving more wide</p> <p>11 evidence about your risk assessment processes, if that's</p> <p>12 all right.</p> <p>13 Can I ask you some questions, please, about our</p> <p>14 theme of male victims, and can I do so by referring you,</p> <p>15 first of all, to SCC000550_032, paragraph 170 and</p> <p>16 onwards, which is Mr Rees's statement where he gives</p> <p>17 some broad figures about the numbers of identified male</p> <p>18 victims within Swansea, and we can see, if we scroll in</p> <p>19 on the top of page 32, he gives some figures about the</p> <p>20 percentages of strategy discussions involving male</p> <p>21 victims in 2017/18 and 2018/19 at 9.46 and</p> <p>22 13.54 per cent respectively, and has set out, I think,</p> <p>23 in that later part of his statement that male victims</p> <p>24 are considered within the same forum as female victims</p> <p>25 and their needs are considered equally, and describes,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 I think, some of the training that has been done on this</p> <p>2 issue.</p> <p>3 If we go just over the page, again, he talks about</p> <p>4 the training about the specific issues that have arisen</p> <p>5 when male victims are concerned. Is there anything else</p> <p>6 that you would like to add on that wider -- on the sort</p> <p>7 of generic topic that he's addressing there?</p> <p>8 A. No. We are acutely aware that the numbers of male young</p> <p>9 people, where we are identifying child sexual</p> <p>10 exploitation, is low in Swansea, and that, I guess, is</p> <p>11 why we are undertaking the training, specific examples</p> <p>12 of where males have been exploited and that training is</p> <p>13 developed on a multi-agency basis. I guess we are very</p> <p>14 curious in Swansea to be thinking about how that wider</p> <p>15 focus on criminal exploitation of children will help us</p> <p>16 identify more males.</p> <p>17 Q. Can I bring up briefly the police evidence on this:</p> <p>18 SWP000151_046, paragraph 5.1, where, from the police</p> <p>19 perspective, if it helps you, Ms Thomas, a similar</p> <p>20 statistic is given, that of the 81 children who had CSE</p> <p>21 strategy meetings in a two-year period that's given</p> <p>22 there, it's said that of the 81 children, 20 per cent</p> <p>23 were male. There were 40 meetings held in relation to</p> <p>24 these 16 males. Therefore, overall, 11 per cent of</p> <p>25 meetings related to male victims. It goes on to explain</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>
<p>1 the training that's been given from their perspective.</p> <p>2 We have some further statistics I might just bring</p> <p>3 up briefly, if I may. SCC000425_001, which is</p> <p>4 statistics held by children in social care about the</p> <p>5 numbers and characteristics of looked-after children</p> <p>6 assessed as being at risk or sexually exploited for each</p> <p>7 of the past years. If we look in the table that we can</p> <p>8 see here, we can see that the percentage split of</p> <p>9 looked-after children referred to the CSE team is</p> <p>10 95.65 per cent females and 4.35 per cent males.</p> <p>11 What do you draw, if anything, from those</p> <p>12 statistics, Ms Thomas?</p> <p>13 A. The theme is the same for looked-after children as it is</p> <p>14 within the non-looked-after children population. You</p> <p>15 know, we are aware of it. We are providing training.</p> <p>16 We are -- it is also a theme within the contextual</p> <p>17 safeguarding pilot. I guess the focus on peer</p> <p>18 relationships and those trusted adults -- so, for</p> <p>19 example, you know, COVID-19 has -- so what we are trying</p> <p>20 to do is flex our services. So during COVID-19, of</p> <p>21 course the youth clubs closed, so we have developed</p> <p>22 a detached youth work approach now within Swansea where</p> <p>23 we have youth workers in the community. We have police</p> <p>24 PCSOs, as they are called. I can't actually remember</p> <p>25 the acronym for that, but they are community police</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 officers out in the community, working with groups of</p> <p>2 young people, groups of females and males, to try to</p> <p>3 develop those trusted relationships and develop those</p> <p>4 safe places and those relationships where young people,</p> <p>5 young males, are able to talk about their worries and</p> <p>6 where potential exploitation can be identified early.</p> <p>7 Q. Can we look, please, at an example of a male victim in</p> <p>8 our case studies -- CS-A221. Can I bring up, please,</p> <p>9 the meeting notes that are at SCC000518. We can see on</p> <p>10 the front page this is a document from last</p> <p>11 year, June 2019. It is an initial child sexual</p> <p>12 exploitation strategy meeting about this child.</p> <p>13 If we go through it, please, on to page 2, we can</p> <p>14 see, as we are going through this, I think, can't we,</p> <p>15 this is the structure of your risk assessment form now?</p> <p>16 "Summary of CSE worries" is a standard heading. This is</p> <p>17 the language now used, isn't it, on the form?</p> <p>18 A. Well, yes. Signs of Safety is our practice framework,</p> <p>19 our child protection practice framework within Swansea,</p> <p>20 so, yes, we talk about what's working well and we talk</p> <p>21 about what we are worried about.</p> <p>22 Q. What is recorded here is:</p> <p>23 "We are worried that CS-A221 ..."</p> <p>24 Pausing there, the date of birth for this child is</p> <p>25 redacted but you can see that it is 2005.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

1 **A. Yes.**
 2 Q. The child is somewhere in the region of 14 years old in
 3 2019:
 4 "We are worried that CS-A221 has been staying at the
 5 home of a registered sex offender for a long period of
 6 time and that parents knew this adult male had
 7 previously been to prison. We know that CS-A221 and
 8 parents were getting presents from this adult male but
 9 did not recognise that they were being groomed.
 10 "We are worried about mum's decision making
 11 regarding risky people and that recently she talked
 12 about allowing a friend to visit the home despite having
 13 been advised not to."
 14 Just a couple of other details to understand the
 15 context of this case, please. We can see that
 16 specifically there were these concerns about the contact
 17 with the registered sex offender. The sex offender was
 18 taken to court and one can see, at internal page 3,
 19 please, that there were court proceedings -- on the
 20 police side of that chart, you can see that -- that the
 21 offender received a 24-month custodial sentence for
 22 breach of a civil order as a result of his contact with
 23 this child.
 24 But then, if you look at the bottom left, you can
 25 see that, following the court hearing, the child had

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1 school. Is that what you understand was part of
 2 the response here?
 3 **A. That might have been part of the response, but it**
 4 **certainly wouldn't have been the whole of the response.**
 5 Q. Forgive me, is there any evidence that you can provide
 6 that specialist input was given to this boy? I didn't
 7 adduce all of the detail of it, but he seemed to have
 8 a borderline learning disability and seemed to have been
 9 exposed to a sustained period of risk for a period of
 10 time. So I'm asking the question about what specialist
 11 input was given to him as opposed to a group lesson?
 12 **A. I obviously have not got the detail of that. I think if**
 13 **I had, I would have been able to get that for you. If**
 14 **I can talk more generally about --**
 15 Q. Just pause there, please. These are children who were
 16 identified by the inquiry from paperwork provided to us
 17 and requests were made by the inquiry for statements and
 18 for the documentation about these children. We have
 19 gone through that process and in the documentation we
 20 have seen we could not identify any specific input for
 21 that child. By all means go away and reflect further,
 22 but, at the moment, that is not something that we can
 23 identify. So will you go away and reflect on that?
 24 **A. What I will do is, I will go away and we will audit that**
 25 **case and ensure that that child has received the**

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1 said that he hates that offender has done this to other
 2 people. The child, CS-A221, had not made any
 3 disclosures of sexual abuse or grooming.
 4 Over the page we can see, if we look, please, on
 5 internal page 4, that the offender, CS-F237 has
 6 purchased a mobile phone for the boy, professionals are
 7 worried about this being returned.
 8 I think we can understand from one other document,
 9 if I may, the nature of what had been described.
 10 I don't want to bring it up, please, but just take that
 11 document down. There is another document, I don't need
 12 to bring it up, but for your reference it is
 13 SCC000436_004. I will just read this out. This is from
 14 a separate document. It is from the risk assessment
 15 form about this child. It says this:
 16 "CS-A221 has made no sexual disclosures by the
 17 perpetrator, but during the police interview he admitted
 18 to sleeping in the same bed as him, albeit under
 19 separate blankets. He also said that the registered sex
 20 offender has hugged him in bed over the clothing. The
 21 perpetrator has since been arrested ..." and so on.
 22 So that gives us a broad context for this case. Our
 23 understanding -- please tell me if this isn't correct --
 24 is that one of the responses of the local authority was
 25 to arrange a group sexual health talk at the child's

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1 **treatment he requires. If I can provide some**
 2 **information about the practice around these issues, we**
 3 **would have -- we would link in with the child disability**
 4 **team to look at how we could communicate, and this is,**
 5 **again, part of the tools that we are developing in the**
 6 **contextual safeguarding pilot about how we can**
 7 **communicate effectively with young people, but we would,**
 8 **and we routinely, link in with child disability team to**
 9 **look at how we can best communicate with this child,**
 10 **given his particular needs --**
 11 Q. Just pause there --
 12 **A. We actually have --**
 13 Q. (Overspeaking).
 14 **A. I'm just trying to explain --**
 15 Q. Mr Rees has already set out in his first statement what
 16 the council does. It is SCC000550_033, please. He's
 17 explained in detail there the working of the child
 18 disability team and things of that nature. So I just
 19 didn't want you to repeat material that we already have.
 20 **A. I wasn't going to do that. I was just going to add some**
 21 **value, really, in that we have developed -- we live live**
 22 **with our integrated safeguarding hub, and we have**
 23 **a senior practitioner within that hub that worked**
 24 **previously for the disabled children's team. So he**
 25 **brings that expertise into that safeguarding hub.**

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<p>1 We also have a dedicated worker from the disability 2 team sitting at our SPOC, our single point of contact, 3 so that we are able to immediately respond to the needs 4 of children -- disabled children.</p> <p>5 What I would say is that, again, Swansea has -- as 6 you know, we have Signs of Safety as our practice 7 framework, and we have standards and collect metrics and 8 performance information about the work we do with 9 children so that we are able to monitor the direct work 10 with children.</p> <p>11 So, you know, one of the standards, as part of any 12 assessment, is that you would do three houses work with 13 the young person, so that you would be able to 14 understand what's good about their -- so that we are 15 able to understand their lived experience, so what's 16 working well for them, what's not, what are they worried 17 about, we would -- we develop safety plans with young 18 people, with families, that are age appropriate. So 19 there is an enormous amount of direct work that goes on 20 in Swansea, and there are standards, there are practice 21 standards, around that.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I just bring you back to this child. This child is 23 described in the documentation that we have already 24 brought up -- I don't need to bring it up again, but 25 I can just give the reference. The school indicate at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 SCC000518_005 that the boy is very closed and quiet and 2 will often reply with one-word answers. We know from 3 other material that it seems that he had some 4 difficulties at school. There is also a suggestion 5 that -- I don't mean difficulties -- I'm trying to put 6 this carefully, if I may. There is evidence that he 7 should have been considered in the context of a child 8 that had some potential learning disabilities --</p> <p>9 A. Mm hmm, mm hmm.</p> <p>10 Q. -- it seems, within the paperwork around his family 11 background.</p> <p>12 At the moment, it isn't apparent to the inquiry what 13 specific consideration was given to those aspects of his 14 case. Do you understand what I'm asking you about?</p> <p>15 A. Yes. So that would have been included in the care and 16 support plan.</p> <p>17 Q. I don't think we have been able to see specific evidence 18 of that in the material that we have so far on that 19 child. So that is --</p> <p>20 A. We will go back and we will look at that case and we 21 will make sure that we are satisfied that the 22 appropriate action has been taken and that young person 23 is in receipt of the support that he needs.</p> <p>24 I would say that the work around that young boy, 25 I think you will see in those documents a shift in terms</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>
<p>1 of the language. I think the language was much more 2 appropriate in the documentation around that young 3 person, which demonstrates a shift in Swansea.</p> <p>4 I would also say that what they -- when they 5 concluded the meeting, they also looked at future harm, 6 and although the perpetrator had received a prison 7 sentence, it was highlighted that the family, you 8 know -- the family had been groomed, and there were 9 worries about their understanding and their ability to 10 recognise future harm. So that was included in the 11 safety plan going forward and there would have been 12 work, ongoing work, around that.</p> <p>13 Q. Can I just ask you again --</p> <p>14 A. I think that's a real positive, that not only are we 15 focusing on past harm and current harm, but we are 16 looking to the future to make sure that we are able to 17 protect children who are particularly vulnerable because 18 they may have particular difficulties, and their family 19 are struggling to identify where there may be issues of 20 exploitation.</p> <p>21 Q. A couple more questions, please, on this topic.</p> <p>22 A. I understand -- sorry, I think there is -- somewhere in 23 the documentation there is information about that young 24 person having support from the NSPCC, which is 25 a specialist team dealing with exploitation. I can't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>	<p>1 put my hand on it. I think it is in the care and 2 support plan, but I believe that is the case.</p> <p>3 Q. This is about CS-A221?</p> <p>4 A. Yes. But we will -- I will make sure that we check 5 that.</p> <p>6 Q. The papers that I took you to before under the 7 "Language" heading that we were looking at where there 8 were those examples of language being used, as far as 9 that child is concerned, CS-A24, to what extent, when 10 there is a child that has, for example, ADHD or 11 something of that nature, is consideration given to how 12 that might impact on their vulnerability or their risk? 13 Because in those documents that I took you to, our 14 understanding is that that child -- bear with me 15 a second to make sure I have a number correct -- CS-A24 16 was recorded as having ADHD and taking medication for 17 that, yet it was for that child that we also saw the 18 language used. I'm trying to understand to what extent 19 that language can be used when a child has a condition 20 of that nature?</p> <p>21 A. I'm sorry, I'm not understanding your point.</p> <p>22 Q. To what extent is ADHD, or something similar to that, in 23 a child used before assessments are made of their own 24 ability to assess risk and things like that?</p> <p>25 A. This is a theme for us in Swansea, I would suggest it is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 across the country, where we have children who are</p> <p>2 displaying emotionally dysregulated behaviours and we</p> <p>3 have to go through -- we have to refer to CAMHS, the NDD</p> <p>4 team. So where there is -- what we would do is, where</p> <p>5 we are hearing that there are worries about a young</p> <p>6 person suffering ADHD -- ASD is another factor, another</p> <p>7 theme -- we would link in with the disability team and</p> <p>8 we would seek advice from them. We would also perhaps</p> <p>9 speak to the school nurse. If it is a looked-after</p> <p>10 child, we would involve our looked-after child health</p> <p>11 specialist.</p> <p>12 We also have a complex needs panel, where we talk</p> <p>13 about children who have complex needs and are able to</p> <p>14 sometimes fast track referrals so that we are able to</p> <p>15 identify and confirm.</p> <p>16 So we work with a hypothesis. To be honest with</p> <p>17 you, there is a lot of research about ADHD and how you</p> <p>18 can work with young people in a therapeutic way and the</p> <p>19 Webster-Stratton parenting programme -- you know, there</p> <p>20 is lots of evidence that you can still work with parents</p> <p>21 to manage that and to de-escalate some of</p> <p>22 the behaviours.</p> <p>23 Q. As far as CS-A24 is concerned, though, when I brought up</p> <p>24 SCC000534_009, the phrasing very much used was "she may</p> <p>25 continue to make unsafe decisions that place herself,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 her mum, her brother and sister and others at risk of</p> <p>2 harm". There doesn't seem to be any suggestion that her</p> <p>3 potentially impaired ability to understand that had been</p> <p>4 taken into account. Do you understand what I'm</p> <p>5 suggesting to you?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I do. I think that language, again, is not</p> <p>7 appropriate, is it? And that's why we would have</p> <p>8 considered -- I think that's why they have brought up</p> <p>9 the issue of ADHD, because we would have wanted to --</p> <p>10 and would have considered the impact of that. Because</p> <p>11 it relates to impulsivity, doesn't it, ADHD? Children</p> <p>12 who have that condition demonstrate very impulsive</p> <p>13 behaviours, and that can be difficult to manage. So we</p> <p>14 would have considered that within the context of child</p> <p>15 sexual exploitation.</p> <p>16 Q. There doesn't seem to be clear evidence of that from</p> <p>17 this particular case file, but I think you have answered</p> <p>18 that as best you can.</p> <p>19 A. No, and I think we obviously have to -- I think, you</p> <p>20 know, I have to accept that there are issues for us</p> <p>21 about the quality of recording and the quality of the</p> <p>22 minutes and the paperwork, and that's why, of course, we</p> <p>23 have a practice lead identified purely for child</p> <p>24 exploitation and that she leads on the work, she chairs</p> <p>25 the strategy meetings, she quality assures the minutes,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>
<p>1 and she raises the themes to the strategic group,</p> <p>2 because we need to see improvement, and I think there is</p> <p>3 evidence from some of the paperwork you have already</p> <p>4 seen that we are on that improvement journey.</p> <p>5 MS HILL: Thank you. Ms Thomas, we have gone a little bit</p> <p>6 longer than we should have done and I'm sorry for that.</p> <p>7 I was keen for you to finish your evidence on that</p> <p>8 topic.</p> <p>9 Chair, can we take our mid-morning break? I realise</p> <p>10 it is an early afternoon break now. Perhaps we can</p> <p>11 resume at 12.25 pm to hear some more evidence from this</p> <p>12 witness?</p> <p>13 THE CHAIR: Yes, we will do that, thank you.</p> <p>14 MS HILL: Chair, if it helps with timetabling generally,</p> <p>15 conscious that we have another witness this afternoon,</p> <p>16 I would hope that this witness will have about</p> <p>17 45 minutes more questions when we return.</p> <p>18 THE CHAIR: Thank you.</p> <p>19 (12.13 pm)</p> <p>20 (A short break)</p> <p>21 (12.25 pm)</p> <p>22 MS HILL: Can I move now to questions about theme 3, risk</p> <p>23 assessment and protection from harm. Can I bring up,</p> <p>24 please, the generic evidence that's already been given</p> <p>25 to the inquiry by Mr Rees. It's SCC000550_004,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>	<p>1 paragraph 14, please, and perhaps go over the page to</p> <p>2 paragraph 20.</p> <p>3 There is an explanation here, broadly, about the</p> <p>4 systems that have been used and the figures that have</p> <p>5 been provided here to help understand the breakdown of</p> <p>6 characteristics that you have here, and there is some</p> <p>7 broad background information about the screening tools</p> <p>8 and assessments that are used.</p> <p>9 A little bit more detail, please, if we can go to</p> <p>10 internal page 13 of this document, beginning at</p> <p>11 paragraph 71, where an explanation is given about how,</p> <p>12 at that point, Swansea was reviewing the child sexual</p> <p>13 exploitation multi-agency strategy meetings, didn't</p> <p>14 currently hold MACE meetings. Do you want to just give</p> <p>15 us the headlines that he sets out in that part of his</p> <p>16 evidence about your risk assessment process with</p> <p>17 reference to the risk assessment form that's used?</p> <p>18 A. I'm really sorry. Where are we exactly?</p> <p>19 Q. So in the --</p> <p>20 A. SCC000550, paragraph 71, are we?</p> <p>21 Q. Yes. I can take you to the totality of it, if you wish.</p> <p>22 It goes right on, in fact, from 71, quite a bit over the</p> <p>23 page, it talks about the different ways in which risk is</p> <p>24 assessed, all the way through, in fact, to paragraph 94,</p> <p>25 and sets out details of the All Wales Protocol about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

1 which we will hear and the prompts for practitioners
 2 that are used. Just tell us a little bit, the sexual
 3 exploitation risk assessment form --
 4 **A. The SERAF, yes.**
 5 Q. -- is used by your organisation. Tell us a little bit
 6 about that, please, for those who aren't familiar with
 7 it?
 8 **A. It is a national requirement that we use the SERAF form,**
 9 **and we have been using it for a number of years. It is**
 10 **not without its challenges. What I would say, though,**
 11 **is, you know, I have been in social work for about**
 12 **35 years and I have yet to find the perfect template for**
 13 **anything. Generally, it is about the skill of**
 14 **the practitioner, isn't it, in terms of providing the**
 15 **information within any document?**
 16 **So we have to use the SERAF. It is under review.**
 17 **We are part of -- Swansea are part of that review**
 18 **process.**
 19 Q. I think you gave some evidence before that Swansea uses
 20 the Signs of Safety model. Have I got that right?
 21 **A. Yes, you have.**
 22 Q. That is an approach used within the UK, but I think
 23 Swansea is one of the early adopters of that approach.
 24 Is that right?
 25 **A. Yes, we were, yes.**

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1 **well-being approach in early health so that we have got**
 2 **one practice framework that sits across the continuum of**
 3 **need. So practitioners, our partners, are all familiar**
 4 **with that approach. It is a strengths-based model. It**
 5 **looks at resilience, it looks at developing safety**
 6 **networks. So that, again, you know, indicates its**
 7 **usefulness for us around exploitation, working with**
 8 **adolescents who experience exploitation, yes.**
 9 Q. I don't think we need too much of the detail, but just
 10 for the note, further on in that statement, at
 11 paragraphs 206 to 211, Mr Rees just sets out the broad
 12 process. I will just try to summarise this, please, if
 13 I may?
 14 **A. 260-what, sorry?**
 15 Q. 206 to 211. If I can just summarise for the panel what
 16 the process that's adopted is. I think this is the
 17 chronology. That there is, first of all, a child sexual
 18 exploitation meeting within eight days of an initial
 19 strategy discussion with the police. There is then
 20 consideration of whether or not the child's name is
 21 placed on your Child Sexual Exploitation Protocol. Is
 22 that just a very simple summary of what your process is?
 23 **A. Yes, it is.**
 24 Q. If we just go further on within the bundle, please, to
 25 his paragraph 268 and onwards, it is on internal page 46

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1 Q. This broadly covers: what is working well; what are we
 2 worried about; what needs to change? Can I ask you
 3 this: do you have a view on whether Signs of Safety, as
 4 an approach, assists with working with adolescent
 5 victims of child sexual exploitation by networks? Do
 6 you think it assists with that?
 7 **A. Yes. I think we -- the contextual safeguarding pilot**
 8 **will help us look at how we integrate the approach**
 9 **better. Because, for example, we would use words and**
 10 **pictures, you know, with younger children. That's not**
 11 **appropriate for adolescents. So we are looking at how**
 12 **we develop more specific adolescent tools within that**
 13 **framework.**
 14 Q. We heard some evidence earlier in the inquiry,
 15 Ms Thomas, about the idea of not using a harm-based
 16 framework but moving -- forgive me, not using
 17 a risk-based framework but moving more to one focused on
 18 harms or well-being. Do you have a view on that?
 19 **A. No. Signs of Safety is a child protection practice**
 20 **framework, so it may not specifically talk about risk,**
 21 **but it is a risk assessment model. We talk about harm,**
 22 **so we have danger statements and we have safety goals**
 23 **within the child protection aspect, and that is the**
 24 **Signs of Safety framework.**
 25 **But in Swansea we have also adopted a signs of**

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1 for Danny, there is further information, I think, about
 2 the SERAF process and some data, in particular, please,
 3 on internal 47, if we could hold those alongside each
 4 other, 46 and 47. At paragraph 276, we can scroll in on
 5 that data, this gives us an indication, does it,
 6 Ms Thomas, of --
 7 **A. (Overspeaking) yes.**
 8 Q. -- the number of children under the CSE Protocol by
 9 month?
 10 **A. Yes.**
 11 Q. And the number of missing episodes and, therefore,
 12 missing children as well, another topic that we will
 13 come to.
 14 **A. Yes.**
 15 Q. Can I ask you to help us understand a little bit about
 16 the threshold for case review. This is a document I'd
 17 like to bring up separately, please, it's SCC000557?
 18 **A. This is the CSE Protocol, is it?**
 19 Q. This is the themes on the threshold from the case
 20 review. There'd been some dip sampling done, I think.
 21 **A. Oh, yes.**
 22 Q. I think it was an attempt to understand whether the
 23 correct thresholds were being used; is that right?
 24 **A. Yes.**
 25 Q. If we can just scroll through that document, please,

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<p>1 Danny, and help us understand what the outcomes of this 2 review were? 3 A. This was led by Carlene, I think, wasn't it? Yes. 4 Q. Just go on through. This was a review that took place, 5 I think, of all cases. The outcomes I think were 6 mapped. The contextual safeguarding network -- the name 7 you just gave was Carlene Firmin; is that right? 8 A. Yes, that's right. It was done as part of the scoping 9 for the pilot. 10 Q. Just carry on through this. Help the chair and panel 11 understand what this document was trying to do? 12 A. I read this a little while ago. I just need to 13 familiarise myself. Oh, it was just a review of 14 the system, it was, wasn't it? Yes. 15 Q. It was trying to understand the way in which the system 16 was operating. Also, if we just go perhaps to internal 17 page 12, it was looking at these cases from the 18 contextual safeguarding perspective. Those are the key 19 documents and the sort of system that you have in place, 20 some words that we have already heard reference to. 21 A. Yes. That's being reviewed. That's being reviewed as 22 part of the pilot. So we are looking at the -- so the 23 front door we feel is quite robust, although there is 24 clearly work we need to do in terms of better early 25 identification and prevention work. And our early help</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 hubs. So our prevention services, our early help 2 services, have moved in now under statutory children's 3 services. So we have a much better opportunity to 4 integrate the work that we do. We have much better 5 communication. We have early help hubs situated in 6 localities within the community. And we have an 7 integrated multi-disciplinary team within those early 8 help hubs. 9 I just wanted to explain what's happening in terms 10 of early intervention and prevention. So then, when it 11 hits our front door, you know, the review from 12 Professor Firmin was that we have got robust 13 arrangements at our front door, but it's what happens 14 next. So the focus now in terms of the pilot is the 15 pathways through the statutory services. So it is 16 about -- 17 Q. I'm just going to interrupt there, if I may, to perhaps 18 make this a bit more straightforward for those who 19 aren't familiar with the safeguarding framework. Could 20 I bring up separately, please -- we can leave that 21 document, I think, but just before we do, look at 22 internal page 13 of that document. This was looking at 23 examples within the files examined, internal page 13. 24 It was finding examples of contextual practice from 25 within particular files, I think. Is that right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>
<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. I think, probably, to have helped everybody, I should 3 have taken you first of all to a more straightforward 4 document, which is from February of this year, 5 INQ005274_003, because that gives us an understanding of 6 what's happening here. If you scroll in, please, to the 7 middle three paragraphs that begin "We are working with 8 the University of Bedfordshire". This is a document 9 from February 2020. I think there is successful bid for 10 them to work with Swansea in creating a contextual 11 safeguarding approach. This sets out the relationships 12 between the environments that children spend their lives 13 and the decisions they make. So that is very simply an 14 explanation of what contextual safeguarding is. When 15 you were talking about the pilot, it is around the work 16 to create that approach within Swansea; is that right? 17 A. Yes, it is, yes. We were one of three, I think, local 18 authorities that put a bid to be part of the pilot, and 19 we were the only Welsh authority that was successful. 20 So, you know, we -- this has really helped us accelerate 21 progress around this specific area, we feel. 22 Q. If we go just to the end -- 23 A. It is a priority area for Swansea Social Care, in terms 24 of an improvement programme. It is also a priority for 25 South Wales Police and it is also a priority for the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 regional safeguarding board. 2 Q. Just to bring us up to date, the end of this document, 3 please, on internal page 4, again, these are the minutes 4 of a meeting or a report of February 2020. There had 5 been a systems review completed by the University of 6 Bedfordshire -- that's Ms Firmin that you have 7 mentioned, I think? 8 A. Yes, and we are doing a scaleup now as part of 9 the pilot. 10 Q. Just to be clear, the second paragraph: 11 "This identified that we are identifying 12 extrafamilial harm within current practice better than 13 the other sites that they looked at across the UK and 14 responding to this in a co-ordinated manner. There is 15 considerable work going on and being developed in 16 regards to CSE and safeguarding young people. Swansea 17 is an area that has been identified as having a large 18 number of county lines gangs within it and therefore the 19 risks to young people and the impact of these criminal 20 operatives is significant locally." 21 I think that's the most recent document we have 22 about your contextual safeguarding approach. 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. Can you help us with anything else around the 25 introduction of this approach and the extent to which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 you see this leading to change in the future?</p> <p>2 A. Yes. I have said a little bit about the prevention --</p> <p>3 early intervention and prevention, so I won't expand on</p> <p>4 that because I'm conscious of time. So the focus now is</p> <p>5 the activity from the front door and developing that</p> <p>6 pathway. So it is about referral, it is about</p> <p>7 screening. So that would be about the SERAF and</p> <p>8 whatever comes instead of it. It is about assessment,</p> <p>9 planning, intervention, with a real focus on peer</p> <p>10 mapping and disruption activity.</p> <p>11 The police -- I have to say, in Swansea we are very</p> <p>12 fortunate. We have very positive multiagency</p> <p>13 partnership working. I talked about the community</p> <p>14 cohesion. We have got good links with mosques, with</p> <p>15 imams, and we have really good buy-in at both</p> <p>16 a strategic and operational level in terms of contextual</p> <p>17 safeguarding pilot.</p> <p>18 I think you will also note, despite the issues</p> <p>19 raised, legitimate issues raised, in terms of</p> <p>20 the paperwork around strategy meetings and things, you</p> <p>21 will notice that those meetings are well attended. We</p> <p>22 have school nurses, we have probation, so at that very</p> <p>23 operational, individual level, we have good buy-in.</p> <p>24 You will also notice that we have children --</p> <p>25 I think it is CS-A25, I think the case is. That young</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 person attended those meetings, so did her mother, her</p> <p>2 father and her maternal grandmother. So it is very much</p> <p>3 about doing with rather than doing to, although that</p> <p>4 hasn't always been reflected in the safety plans,</p> <p>5 I would say that, but that is certainly an area that we</p> <p>6 are progressing.</p> <p>7 Q. To what extent has there been a shift in focus from CSE,</p> <p>8 so child sexual exploitation, to child exploitation more</p> <p>9 generally?</p> <p>10 A. There hasn't been a shift. We have widened the remit,</p> <p>11 that's all. CSE still maintains -- is still a priority</p> <p>12 area for us. But we feel that there are benefits with</p> <p>13 broadening the scope because we think we will be able to</p> <p>14 identify sexual exploitation through exploring criminal</p> <p>15 exploitation, particularly around males, because we are</p> <p>16 finding that males are predominantly, I would say --</p> <p>17 maybe "predominantly" is a bit strong, but are involved</p> <p>18 in the county lines activities.</p> <p>19 Q. I have jumped around a little bit. You have effectively</p> <p>20 given evidence about partnership working and also about</p> <p>21 the contextual safeguarding elements. Can I ask you</p> <p>22 then some questions about our theme 4c, which is</p> <p>23 looked-after children. I do that, please, by bringing</p> <p>24 up Mr Rees's first statement, SCC000550, paragraph 57.</p> <p>25 I think the longer part is at 103, which is internal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>
<p>1 page _018.</p> <p>2 Danny, if we could have internal page _018 alongside</p> <p>3 internal page _019, and I don't know if we can fit</p> <p>4 internal page _020 on the screen as well. That would be</p> <p>5 great.</p> <p>6 We have some statistics here given by Mr Rees about</p> <p>7 the differences between children in county and out of</p> <p>8 county.</p> <p>9 If we scroll in, please, on _018 and look at the</p> <p>10 paragraph 103, information is given there that</p> <p>11 between April 2017 and March 2019, which is the first</p> <p>12 period about which the inquiry asked questions, Swansea</p> <p>13 recorded 554 episodes of looked-after children going</p> <p>14 missing or being absent, and then the breakdown was</p> <p>15 about whether or not they were looked-after children</p> <p>16 placed in county, which was 401, and 143 were for</p> <p>17 looked-after children placed outside of Swansea. Then</p> <p>18 there are some further figures given of the number of</p> <p>19 missing episodes by gender split, continuing over the</p> <p>20 page.</p> <p>21 Is there anything in particular you want to say</p> <p>22 about those statistics that we see there?</p> <p>23 A. No, other than, you know, predominantly, the missing</p> <p>24 episodes are happening in county. But you would expect</p> <p>25 that. I mean, Swansea have, and have done for a number</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>	<p>1 of years, a well-established Safe LAC Reduction</p> <p>2 Strategy. We have a vision statement that clearly</p> <p>3 articulates that our vision is that children will be</p> <p>4 safely cared for within their own families and within</p> <p>5 their communities of origin, and if that's not possible,</p> <p>6 that we will achieve permanence for them in a timely</p> <p>7 way.</p> <p>8 I think it is the same in England, but you may know</p> <p>9 that there is a strong focus for Welsh Government -- the</p> <p>10 First Minister Mark Drakeford particularly is very vocal</p> <p>11 about his concerns about the high numbers of</p> <p>12 looked-after children in Wales.</p> <p>13 What we know is that, generally, particularly in</p> <p>14 residential care, we do not achieve good outcomes. We</p> <p>15 have done in Swansea, because we -- so I would say seven</p> <p>16 years ago we had 60 young people in residential care,</p> <p>17 and they were spread all over the country.</p> <p>18 We have 25 young people in residential care at this</p> <p>19 moment in time, and I don't think any of them currently</p> <p>20 are in England. So we have specifically had</p> <p>21 a repatriation policy of keeping children as close to</p> <p>22 home as possible.</p> <p>23 There are clearly exceptions to that rule, and where</p> <p>24 we think that it is absolutely unsafe for them because</p> <p>25 of exploitation in the main, then we will move them out</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 of area. But that is not -- you know, that is not 2 a panacea. We had a young boy in the north of England 3 who was going missing. Very, very difficult to 4 co-ordinate services, to understand what matters for 5 that young person. So I think it's important for you to 6 understand the Swansea context, and maybe the Welsh 7 context. 8 Q. We will hear evidence in due course about the All Wales 9 child protection procedures. If you go further on, 10 please, to internal pages _024 and _025 in this 11 statement, Danny, we can see that figures are given 12 about the number of referrals for children placed in 13 Swansea from other areas. Do you see that table at 14 page 130? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. And the evidence of Mr Rees is that it is more 17 challenging to work with children who are placed in 18 Swansea from outside because the organisation doesn't 19 always have the background information about that child. 20 Do those challenges continue? 21 A. Yes, they do. Swansea has particular challenges because 22 we have high numbers of independent residential homes 23 within the borough. 24 We have published our market position statement. We 25 have undertaken a placement sufficiency strategy, so we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 know what the needs of our population of looked-after 2 children is, and we are actively discouraging homes and 3 providers from opening homes in our area because it does 4 put pressure not just on social care, but on education 5 and on our mental health services. 6 You know, what we find in Swansea is, if we can 7 safely keep children in county, then we can provide that 8 wrap-around support for them. We have got good 9 multi-agency partnership relationships. We have 10 developed really positive services. We have got an 11 internal therapy service, we have got a MAPS -- 12 multi-agency placement support -- service, so our 13 children can access locally those quality services. 14 When they go out of county, they can't. 15 That is the same for children coming into Swansea. 16 They wouldn't be able to access our MAPS service, they 17 wouldn't be able to access our internal therapy service. 18 Much more difficult to manage those -- long-arm manage 19 those cases. 20 Children in residential homes, they are children 21 with complex needs. We don't place children in 22 residential homes anymore unless there is that specific 23 need for that care, and even then we are very careful 24 about matching, because we know that young people, if 25 they are placed in residential care with other young</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>
<p>1 people, that can cause -- we know that they can be 2 involved in all sorts of antisocial behaviour and get 3 involved in county lines because those young people are 4 our most vulnerable young people, so, yes, it is 5 a problem. 6 Q. Sorry, (overspeaking) -- 7 A. Sorry, I could go on. 8 Q. I'm just trying to focus on some of the other 9 statistics, please, if I may, to understand the scale of 10 the issue here. Can I look at SCC000444_001, please, 11 which illustrates a breakdown of the number of missing 12 episodes -- 13 A. Is that in my bundle? 14 Q. I don't think it will be. I think it is in section B of 15 our bundle. But it is documentation provided with 16 Mr Rees's evidence. It gives data up to March 2019. It 17 shows the total number of MISPER episodes, 544. Then it 18 breaks that down to those that were in county and those 19 that were out of county. We can see there are, I think, 20 on the -- under the out of county one, respectively, 21 27.21 and 25.20 per cent of those children going missing 22 are out of county. Is that right? 23 A. I can't see that on here. 24 Q. Isn't that how one reads the blue? 25 A. I can't see it because the videos are up. Oh, there,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 okay. Yes, that's fine. I can see it. 2 Q. Broadly, somewhere between 27 and 25 per cent are of 3 children placed out of county. So my question is this, 4 that given that those children represent around 5 a quarter of the missing episodes, is there a need for 6 some more robust ability for Swansea to monitor what's 7 happening to those children placed out of county? 8 A. Our out-of-county children are very closely monitored. 9 We understand that they are our most vulnerable children 10 because it is more difficult to provide that long-arm 11 support. 12 I guess there is -- again, there is a particular 13 piece of work going on that Swansea are involved in, the 14 critical incident group, and that relates to what is 15 missing, what does "missing" mean? We have been 16 involved in developing a new way of working around 17 missing children with South Wales Police. 18 Swansea have put in place particular local 19 arrangements because we felt that the regional 20 arrangements needed tweaking. What we are -- the Voice 21 of the Child has been very powerful in the development 22 of that policy. 23 The All Wales safeguarding procedures are used in 24 all areas, so we have to use that. But what we find is 25 that we have children who maybe are just down the park</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

1 **or down their friend's house, and -- as any children**
2 **are, and they just don't turn up. But the policy is**
3 **that we have to report them, and it's very difficult**
4 **to -- it's been very difficult to unpack what an**
5 **unauthorised absence is and what are actually missing**
6 **episodes.**
7 **So what we found is that it's difficult. You know,**
8 **it's the wood and the trees business, isn't it, you**
9 **know? So we have worked --**
10 Q. I'm sorry to cut across you. I'm just conscious of
11 time. In fact, I didn't propose to ask you a detailed
12 set of questions about missing children. I was looking
13 at looked-after children in particular.
14 **A. I think it is important for the inquiry to know, though,**
15 **that there are opportunities for us, because of**
16 **the development of that policy, to really drill into and**
17 **identify those children that we should be most concerned**
18 **about.**
19 Q. Be reassured, it is one of our themes, and we have
20 extensive generic evidence from Swansea on it. I just
21 haven't chosen to focus the topics list on it.
22 Can I ask you instead about children who are looked
23 after but placed in unregulated placements.
24 SCC000448_001. Again, the statistics that were provided
25 to the inquiry indicate that the -- the question was,

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1 **We had a trajectory -- we had to put trajectories in**
2 **place for CIW to reassure them that work was being**
3 **undertaken to place those young people in regulated**
4 **settings, and we hit those trajectories every time. So**
5 **it is something that we take very seriously, and we**
6 **haven't had any young people in unregulated placements**
7 **for, I think, a year.**
8 **Previous to that short period, we did not have any**
9 **unregulated placements.**
10 Q. Just for completeness on this topic, can I ask you to
11 look at the Children's Commissioner for Wales'
12 statement, please. It is at CFW000021_006,
13 paragraph 3.4, which sets out the views of
14 the commissioner. Scroll in, please, on paragraph 3.4.
15 What is your understanding of the views of
16 the commissioner about the use of unregulated placement
17 for younger children? This is a summary of a meeting
18 I think in July 2018. The Welsh Government's position
19 then was that they didn't feel it was proportionate or
20 appropriate to notify the police when a child who is
21 looked after is placed in their area. But go on to look
22 at what is said about how there is an assessment made
23 about children moved around out of area. It is about
24 the monitoring and the round table here. Do you want to
25 respond to this evidence? I think this was put on your

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1 how many looked-after children at risk of sexual
2 exploitation were placed in unregulated care placements
3 in each of the two years to 31 March 2019? Those are
4 the figures that were given, that there were three
5 unregulated care placements, and there were -- the
6 number of young people was 3, 37 missing person
7 episodes, the total number when placed in unregulated
8 care placements was 9. To what extent is the use of
9 unregulated care placements for children at risk of
10 sexual exploitation in Swansea still carried out?
11 **A. You will know that Swansea have a very good track**
12 **record. We don't place children in unregulated**
13 **placements and CIW will -- we clearly have, but, as**
14 **a rule, we do not place children in unregulated**
15 **placements, and CIW would be able to confirm that**
16 **because it is very carefully monitored by our regulated**
17 **body.**
18 **So we had -- we had a period of time where we had**
19 **children with particularly -- or young people with**
20 **particularly complex needs and we experienced**
21 **significant difficulty matching them to a residential**
22 **placement. So they were placed in unregulated**
23 **placements with significant wrap-around support. Those**
24 **placements were monitored and I had to provide a weekly**
25 **update to CIW to ensure that the arrangements were safe.**

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1 topics list, Ms Thomas. Do you want to respond to it?
2 **A. We have local policies where we have to notify -- we**
3 **have procedures in place where we have to notify where**
4 **we're placing a young person in another county. That is**
5 **standard practice. Also, it is the same if any other**
6 **authority places a young person in Swansea.**
7 **The issues we have is, some of those children have**
8 **such complex needs that they're moved around on a crisis**
9 **basis, and then -- you know, so we don't have the**
10 **opportunity, and that's what our complex needs panels**
11 **are about, is that we come together as a multi-agency**
12 **group and look at, if we are placing a child out of**
13 **county, whether or not their educational needs, their**
14 **health needs, their social care needs can be met.**
15 **Whenever we are moving children out of county, we try to**
16 **do it in a planned way and I think we have a good**
17 **success story there. Unfortunately, it is not always**
18 **the case when children move into Swansea. So they are**
19 **coming in maybe on a crisis basis. You know, we are not**
20 **able to check out with the providers whether this is**
21 **a good match within the residential home, and I think,**
22 **you know, those issues have been very well rehearsed**
23 **with Welsh Government and the Children's Commissioner.**
24 MS HILL: Chair, I see the time. I have a small group of
25 questions to put to Ms Thomas. I think it will take

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<p>1 about 15 minutes. Perhaps it would be appropriate, if 2 we can, to take our lunch break. 3 A. I'm really sorry to be a nuisance and I know that you 4 have been sitting all morning. It is a little bit 5 problematic for me to come back after lunch. I would be 6 very happy to just stick with it, if you can. 7 MS HILL: Chair, it depends, perhaps, rather, on whether 8 you're willing to sit a little bit longer and whether 9 you and the panel members have some questions. 10 A. I do apologise and I don't mean to be difficult. 11 THE CHAIR: It is not exactly convenient for us, but if we 12 can get through this, then we will complete this witness 13 now. 14 A. Thank you very much. I very much appreciate that. 15 MS HILL: I will perhaps try to do this as shortly as I can. 16 Could I ask, then, for the timelines to be brought 17 up on screen. That might be the most effective way of 18 doing it. I don't think there is a difficulty with 19 bringing the Swansea timelines up on the screen. 20 Perhaps I could be told if there is a problem. If not, 21 can I bring up the child-specific timelines that were 22 read out this morning by Mr Livingston. INQ006147. Can 23 I look, please, first of all, at, I think, a child we 24 haven't looked at closely, and that's CS-A25. Can we go 25 to that part of the timeline, please. Just perhaps go</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 through and remind yourself of the facts in relation to 2 CS-A25. I should have perhaps indicated in introducing 3 these children a little bit more about the background 4 for each child. But as far as CS-A25 is concerned, the 5 narrative has been read out by Mr Livingston, but, 6 broadly, this was a child where the child was looked 7 after, there's evidence of the child being sexually 8 abused by associated males, the child was one of several 9 siblings with a long history of domestic violence. 10 In relation to this particular child, our 11 understanding is that the child was assessed as high 12 risk in July 2018, but then removed from the CSE 13 protocol in November 2018. Can we just scroll through 14 the chronology for this child, please, from the 15 timeline. 16 We can see the series of references throughout 2017, 17 and then if we look, please, in July 2018, the child was 18 14 years old, was considered to be at high risk of 19 exploitation. Then in August there was a strategy 20 meeting, then a child protection meeting, and we scroll 21 down. In November 2018, we see reference to the child's 22 involvement with CAMHS, the child's potential 23 neurodevelopmental issues. Then our understanding is 24 that the child was removed from the CSE Protocol. 25 Having now been given the opportunity to review this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>
<p>1 case and specifically directed to look at the risk 2 assessment in this case, because that was the topic put 3 on the topics list for you, can you comment on whether 4 or not the risk there was properly managed in terms of 5 this child being removed from the protocol 6 in November 2018? 7 A. Yes. I mean, hindsight is a wonderful thing. Of 8 course, when you're operating at this meta level and, 9 you know, there isn't the detail, is there, that I would 10 normally have available to me within the evidence. 11 However, it is obvious that they have taken an approach 12 and looked at the definition of "child sexual abuse" and 13 come to a decision that the key area of concern wasn't 14 around CSE, it was around safeguarding, complex 15 safeguarding issues, and that work continued. 16 However, I would say that removing that young person 17 from the CSE register at that point was probably 18 premature, and it is a theme that we have taken up, 19 and -- yes. So I think yes is the answer to that. 20 I would say in relation, if I can help, to CS-A25, 21 we have followed up the progress of all the young people 22 where we have provided timelines, and I can say that 23 this young person is still an open case to us. During 24 COVID, we RAG statused all our cases. We did it on 25 a multi-agency basis so that we could prioritise the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 risks and the visits, the face-to-face visits. It's 2 currently a green RAG status. There are no CSE issues 3 identified. She is in college and she is reported to be 4 doing well. 5 So subsequent to that decision, I would agree that 6 it was a premature decision to remove her from the 7 register, and it is something we have picked up as 8 a theme, and we will be working with the -- as part of 9 the contextual safeguarding pilot. However, the 10 intervention that followed has obviously achieved good 11 outcomes for her. 12 Q. In due course -- I think we haven't time to do it 13 today -- we will invite the panel to look at documents 14 that go from between July and November 2018 in relation 15 to that child, the references for which are on the 16 topics list, and the removal of the child from the 17 CSE Protocol, I think on 14 November. So in particular 18 it will be SCC000537. 19 Now, CS-A24 is the child whose case I took you to at 20 the very beginning, where I put those examples of 21 language about the child. Again, I should have perhaps 22 introduced the background to CS-A24 a little more. This 23 was the one where she had disclosed what was described 24 as five or six sexual partners since the age of 11. 25 There was a concern about references to a group of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

1 males. It seems, from looking at the paperwork --
 2 again, you have been asked to look again at CS-A24's
 3 case -- there seemed to be a distinction drawn between
 4 what was felt to be the "historic" abuse and her current
 5 position, and the questions that the inquiry have around
 6 that that were put on the topics list were about whether
 7 or not risk properly took into account what was being
 8 considered to be historic abuse. Do you want to answer
 9 that?
 10 **A. Yes. Past harm, as we know, is a good predictor of**
 11 **future harm, and it would have been important to**
 12 **consider that as part of the risk assessment.**
 13 Q. The paperwork that we have suggests that the focus was
 14 very much on the immediate risk, and it isn't very clear
 15 what consideration was given to those "historic risks"
 16 and whether those perpetrators could still potentially
 17 have contact with her. Do you want to reflect on that?
 18 That is the issue that was put on the topics list.
 19 **A. We have reflected on that. I think Damian Rees has**
 20 **indicated in his evidence that our involvement in this**
 21 **inquiry has supported us to review our practice and**
 22 **identify themes that will be incorporated into the**
 23 **contextual safeguarding pilot going forward. You know,**
 24 **we are a learning organisation, and it is important that**
 25 **we are able to review these cases and identify the**

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1 reading of the CS-A220 papers suggests?
 2 **A. Can you bring that up for me?**
 3 Q. CS-A220. If we go to the timeline, that might be the
 4 best way of doing it.
 5 **A. I'm quite familiar with them, but --**
 6 Q. Can we perhaps bring up the timeline?
 7 **A. I know most of them, but that one -- can I just also**
 8 **say, in terms of CS-A24, that we have achieved stability**
 9 **for that young person. There are no further CSE worries**
 10 **and there is ongoing support in place.**
 11 Q. This was a child who became looked after -- I'll help
 12 you with the background -- at the age of 16 after
 13 disclosing that she'd been the victim of recent and
 14 historic rapes. The issue, as far as the inquiry is
 15 concerned, is that, beyond her 18th birthday, it does
 16 appear as if she was given extensive support?
 17 **A. Yes, she was. Normally, we would not have -- normally,**
 18 **at 18, if there were any concerns, we would have**
 19 **transitioned over to adult services, but we felt that**
 20 **the risks were very high, that the workers had very**
 21 **positive relationships with her, and we wanted to**
 22 **continue our involvement to try and achieve stability**
 23 **and safety for her going forward. We would still have**
 24 **involved and consider her as a vulnerable adult and**
 25 **eligible for services from adult services as well.**

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1 **themes and take action, and that's what we're doing.**
 2 Q. CS-A24 was also removed from the CSE Protocol, and it
 3 appears that, at the time that happened, there were
 4 still significant risk factors in place around contact
 5 with -- well, a youth who was a violent offender having
 6 contact with her, links to other cases, contact that
 7 adult males appear to be able to have, and so on. Have
 8 you reflected on whether that case was also --
 9 **A. Yes, and that --**
 10 Q. -- removed from the CSE Protocol?
 11 **A. Yes. I guess that's what I was saying when we**
 12 **considered CS-A25, is that we have identified a theme**
 13 **about premature removal from the -- during that period.**
 14 Q. Just finally, if I may --
 15 **A. That goes back, again, to the importance of having that**
 16 **dedicated practice lead and senior social work**
 17 **practitioner for child exploitation sitting in that**
 18 **integrated hub, undertaking those strategy meetings.**
 19 **She is very experienced, so we are upping the quality**
 20 **and we are also auditing the quality.**
 21 Q. Finally, in relation to CS-A220, a slightly different
 22 question in relation to this one. Is it your
 23 understanding, from having reviewed the paperwork about
 24 CS-A220, that the support offered to that child beyond
 25 the 16th birthday was extensive? Is that what you're

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1 Q. For completeness, I think the chair and panel can look
 2 in due course also at CS-A56, I think, who, again,
 3 received a specialist leaving care placement, housing
 4 and enhanced support beyond the 18th birthday; is that
 5 right?
 6 **A. Yes. I think that does demonstrate the commitment that**
 7 **we have to young people and our commitment to achieving**
 8 **safety and good outcomes for them into adulthood.**
 9 MS HILL: Thank you, chair and panel, those are all my
 10 questions for the witness. Thank you very much. The
 11 chair and panel may have some questions for you.
 12 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Yes, I will start with a couple of
 13 questions and then I will pass over to my colleagues.
 14 Questions from THE PANEL
 15 THE CHAIR: Ms Thomas, you have talked quite a lot about
 16 safe and unsafe spaces for individual children.
 17 I wanted to ask you about safety or otherwise of public
 18 spaces. By that, I mean bus stations, public parks,
 19 shopping centres, underpasses, late night petrol
 20 stations, where, in several parts of the UK, CSE has
 21 been known to occur. Do you have a strategy for
 22 addressing prevention and identification in those public
 23 spaces, assuming, of course, it would be along with the
 24 police?
 25 **A. Yes, you're absolutely right, and we are undertaking**

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1 assessments of unsafe places. I can think, you know --
 2 I can think of a particular place in Swansea now, where
 3 there has been -- that I have been involved in
 4 a strategic meeting around worries around adolescent
 5 safety in that context. So it is with the police, it is
 6 with our community safety officers. We have housing
 7 involved. We have the youth service involved. Yes,
 8 absolutely, that is a real focus for us going forward,
 9 and a real theme in terms of the contextual safeguarding
 10 work.

11 THE CHAIR: Do you pass intelligence or knowledge from work
 12 with individual children to the police, even though you
 13 have no definitive evidence?

14 **A. Yes, through that forum, yes.**

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you. My second question concerns the
 16 reference to mosques and imams and good relationships
 17 with them. Do you engage with women and girls from
 18 ethnic minority communities in your areas -- and I'm
 19 thinking of either charities or community groups
 20 concerned with CSE?

21 **A. Yes, we do. We have got strong links with BAWSO, we
 22 have got EYST and I believe that they have a specific
 23 women's -- women's and girls' group. Yes, I'm right,
 24 they have a specific women's and girls' group that they
 25 run that we link in with. We also have our culturally**

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1 levels. So it's at a strategic, it's at an operational,
 2 it's at a face-to-face level.

3 I suppose the work that we are doing will be
 4 evidenced in the scaleup of the contextual safeguarding
 5 pilot.

6 MS SHARPLING: Thank you.

7 THE CHAIR: Mr Frank?

8 MR FRANK: No, thank you.

9 THE CHAIR: Sir Malcolm?

10 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: No, thank you, chair.

11 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much to Ms Thomas.

12 We will now break for lunch and return at 2.15 pm.

13 **A. Thank you very much for tolerating my request to
 14 elongate and finish. Thank you. I really appreciate
 15 it. Thank you. Bye bye.**

16 **(The witness withdrew)**

17 MS HILL: Thank you, chair.

18 (1.15 pm)

19 (The short adjournment)

20 (2.15 pm)

21 THE CHAIR: Ms Hill?

22 MS HILL: Thank you, chair. Our next witness, please, is
 23 Daniel Richards from South Wales Police.

24 MR DANIEL RICHARDS (affirmed)

25

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1 harmful behaviour worker sitting in our integrated
 2 safeguarding hub.

3 THE CHAIR: What's the focus of your engagement with them?

4 **A. Sorry? I didn't catch that.**

5 THE CHAIR: What is the focus of your engagement with these
 6 groups? These are women-led groups, are they?

7 **A. Yes, they are women-led groups, yes, and we might refer
 8 some of our parents into those groups. If there are any
 9 concerns or worries, then EYST will communicate with us
 10 and look at whether or not we -- any early intervention
 11 support is required or any additional support is
 12 required for those women or young people.**

13 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Ms Sharpling, do you have
 14 any questions?

15 MS SHARPLING: Just the one, please, chair, thank you very
 16 much.

17 Just one question from me, if I may. We have heard
 18 a lot from core participants, and indeed witnesses, of
 19 the distance between the policy intent and the actual
 20 delivery and the front line, or the service, that is
 21 recognised as being good. Can you just tell me very
 22 briefly what your implementation processes involve? If
 23 you want to take a specific example, please do so.

24 **A. I think that's a really interesting point. That's why
 25 we -- the contextual safeguarding training is at all**

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1 Examination by MS HILL

2 MS HILL: You are Daniel Richards; is that right?

3 **A. That's correct.**

4 Q. You are temporary Assistant Chief Constable from
 5 South Wales Police; is that correct?

6 **A. I'm actually a chief superintendent. I recently
 7 completed a period of several months as temporary ACC,
 8 but have now reverted to my substantive rank.**

9 Q. Forgive me. I have just seen your most recent statement
 10 that tells us that. You have provided the inquiry with
 11 a series of statements, the URNs for which are
 12 SWP000151, 150 and 155. Chair, with your permission,
 13 I formally adduce those statements in full, please.

14 **A. Thank you.**

15 Q. If you can't see or hear me or can't follow any of
 16 the questions, please let me know, and do remember the
 17 restriction orders that are in place?

18 **A. Thank you.**

19 Q. You should have a list of topics that I propose to ask
 20 you questions about. I will be asking you questions
 21 until, I think, 3.15 pm, and then we may have some more
 22 questions for you after our mid-afternoon break, if that
 23 is all right?

24 **A. Thank you.**

25 Q. May I deal first of all with the issue of problem

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<p>1 profiling and South Wales Police's understanding of 2 the nature and extent of the child sexual exploitation 3 by networks. Can I bring up, please, your first witness 4 statement where you gave some evidence about this in 5 primarily section 1 of your witness statement, so it's 6 SWP000151_002, scrolling in at the heading "Disruption 7 and profiling". I'm just dealing now, Mr Richards, with 8 the profiling issue, if I may. 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. Very broadly, you have given quite a bit of evidence, 11 and we can see from paragraph 1.2 right through to 1.10, 12 about the understanding that South Wales Police has of 13 this issue. From the documentation, it seems that there 14 are in existence several different types of profile. If 15 I have understood it correctly, there is a July 2019 CSE 16 profile for South Wales myself and an August 2019 one 17 specific to Swansea. Is that broadly right? 18 A. Yes, that's correct. 19 Q. Do you want to draw out any of the key elements of 20 either the South Wales Police or the Swansea profile for 21 us? 22 A. I think probably the key elements relate, for me, to the 23 limited numbers that have been harvested over a 12-month 24 period, in terms of incidences of CSE; the fact there's 25 an apparent absence of analytical representation with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 regard to organised networks; and I think the profile 2 with regard to the demographic, the gender particularly, 3 of the victims involved is significant in terms of -- in 4 the majority, almost 90 per cent of cases, they are 5 obviously female. So the numbers, in terms of 6 the force, 57 incidents, and in terms of Western BCU -- 7 that stands for basic command unit or division -- that 8 represents I think four cases. So the numbers are 9 small. The victims are generally female and there's an 10 apparent absence in the data to organised networks. 11 I think they are probably the highlights. 12 Q. Can I pick up a couple of points, please. 13 Paragraph 1.3, running over from page 2 to page 3, 14 please, Danny, of your first statement. The definition 15 that you have used for child sexual exploitation is the 16 Department of Education's definition. That is how you 17 have categorised, I think, the 56 incidents. Is that 18 right? 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. You explain at paragraph 1.5 with a little more detail, 21 as you have just said, that only three of the 56 22 occurrences were committed by females; is that right? 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. The figures you have given already about the proportion 25 in the Swansea area we have heard about. Perhaps look</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>
<p>1 at 1.8, please. Tell us what is known about how 2 perpetrators first establish contact with their victim 3 in these sort of cases. 4 A. So it's a variety of locations in terms of establishing 5 contact with the victim. Obviously some of it is going 6 to be online through various digital apps and devices. 7 Some of it is going to be linked to street drinking, 8 often at locations that are associated possibly with 9 take-aways or antisocial behaviour. And others would be 10 engaged with perpetrators through existing, sometimes 11 historic, family or friend relationships. 12 Q. You give some more up-to-date data at paragraph 1.10 13 which confirms the figures for the calendar year 2019. 14 You give figures there of 414 incidents in the calendar 15 year recorded with a CSE qualifier, of which 114 with 16 the central -- I think it is the Western BCU at Swansea, 17 isn't it, which is 103? 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. 74 within that BCU are specifically related to Swansea? 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. Help us with your explanation for the statistics in 22 relation to children's homes and looked-after children 23 in that area? 24 A. I think the first thing to consider with this piece of 25 data is the fact that this doesn't have a relationship</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>	<p>1 with a definition, as per the figures we have discussed 2 earlier. It's data that actually relates to local 3 qualifiers, which are less precise and more general. 4 The data, obviously, with regard to Western and 5 Swansea has a relationship with the fact that there is 6 a considerable -- a comparably large number of care 7 homes in the Western BCU division. 8 Q. So you have indicated, I think, on the second line of 9 this paragraph that these figures are generated by those 10 incidents that are recorded with what you describe as 11 a CSE qualifier. 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. How is that categorised by reference to the definition 14 from the Department of Education that we have just 15 talked about? 16 A. Well, it doesn't, really, because the first set of 17 figures obviously has a clear relationship that's 18 dependent on the word "exchange". So when the problem 19 profile is prepared, there's obviously a need to 20 cross-reference the harvesting of all the data through 21 the Nexus tool, which is an analytical tool, and the 22 free text search of all our intelligence systems. 23 Q. Just go back up, please, to paragraph 1.9. You talk 24 here about the issues with understanding exchange and 25 categorising it. Do you see there?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

1 **A. Yes.**
 2 Q. Carry on.
 3 **A. So with the -- the 414 doesn't have a relationship to**
 4 **the word "exchange" and there possibly lies in an aspect**
 5 **of the documents that is quite restricted because the**
 6 **word "exchange" is obviously very important when it**
 7 **comes to harvesting those, I think, 57 occurrences, four**
 8 **of which are in Swansea. So it's -- the word "exchange"**
 9 **is the discriminator there.**
 10 Q. If that not abundantly clear from the information on
 11 police systems, is the net result that the incident may
 12 well be categorised as child sexual abuse, not
 13 exploitation, and therefore the exploitation figures may
 14 be under-reported?
 15 **A. So the figure of 414 will include -- is dependent on**
 16 **a practitioner selecting the local qualifier, and often**
 17 **that will be done with a specific intent around being**
 18 **vigilant to make sure CSE is captured. On scrutiny,**
 19 **I think those 414 incidents will contain a range of**
 20 **occurrences and crimes, some of which will involve CSE,**
 21 **some might involve criminal exploitation, some might**
 22 **just simply relate to child sexual abuse.**
 23 Q. You indicate at the end of that paragraph -- perhaps we
 24 can scroll in, Danny, on the second half of
 25 paragraph 1.9 -- that the force recognises that there

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1 **intelligence across both the UK but also across the**
 2 **world, to be honest with you.**
 3 Q. Can I just bring up the statistics that you give about
 4 the perpetrators and the ethnicity issues, please. It's
 5 SWP000151_005, paragraph 1.14 through to 1.16, Danny,
 6 please. Do you see here, I think, you have provided,
 7 Mr Richards, a profile that CSE victims, as I think you
 8 have said, were predominantly aged 11 to 16.
 9 50.0 per cent were recorded as female. You explain
 10 a number of ways in which CSE perpetrators come into
 11 contact with their victims, such as online, through
 12 family friends, hairdresser or the suspect being the
 13 babysitter. Where recorded, 75 per cent of both
 14 perpetrators and victims recorded as white British and
 15 25 per cent of victims had no ethnicity recorded. Is
 16 that right?
 17 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 18 Q. 75 per cent of perpetrators were male and aged between
 19 20 and 51, and all of the CSE victims were known to
 20 police as either victims of other occurrences,
 21 perpetrators or as a missing person.
 22 **A. Yes, which is a cross-reference to antecedents that are**
 23 **often unstable.**
 24 Q. You can bring that down, Danny. I don't need to go to
 25 the detail, I don't think, but is this right, in

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1 are data gaps and has taken a series of steps -- I think
 2 there are five different things you set out at the end
 3 of 1.9 -- to try to give a more solid evidence base. Is
 4 that fair?
 5 **A. Yes. Some of the aspects that are referred to in that**
 6 **paragraph relate to many of the post-procedural changes**
 7 **that we have brought into play within the force since**
 8 **2016. Again, yes, we are aware of the restrictions or**
 9 **the constraints of the document and, again, we are aware**
 10 **that that, dependent on the word "exchange", depends on**
 11 **physical evidence of something solid being passed, such**
 12 **as a mobile phone or cash or a reward, and doesn't pick**
 13 **up on some of the other things that are required by**
 14 **victims that aren't physical, such as emotional needs.**
 15 Q. You have indicated, I think -- we don't need to bring it
 16 up; we can take that page down now, Danny, thank you --
 17 that, in addition to the CSE profile, there is
 18 a discrete online sexual offending profile. Is there
 19 anything in particular you want to tell us about that?
 20 **A. So, again, our response to CSE online has been marked**
 21 **and complements our activities around CSE. We can**
 22 **evidence that through the introduction of a POLIT team,**
 23 **but also an investment on a regional basis in an**
 24 **undercover online unit that seeks to engage perpetrators**
 25 **online and allows for the sharing of evidence and**

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1 relation to the profile specific to Swansea, the four
 2 perpetrators who were featured in that were also already
 3 known to the police for the commission of previous
 4 offences, albeit that only one was relating to an
 5 offence against a child, a sexual offence against
 6 a child. Is that right?
 7 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 8 Q. For the note, we can just record that at SWP000151_007,
 9 paragraph 1.27, you have given a breakdown in relation
 10 to the perpetrators for that Swansea profile by
 11 slightly -- with slightly more detail, and including
 12 reference to the victims as well.
 13 Another document that you referred to and we can
 14 perhaps bring up the foot of internal page 8 of that
 15 last document, Danny, so SWP000151_008. In terms of
 16 other profiling-type documents, Mr Richards, there are
 17 regular missing person reports provided by the BCU; is
 18 that right?
 19 **A. That's correct.**
 20 Q. There is also separately what's called a monthly
 21 vulnerability report per sector. Do you want to explain
 22 that a little bit?
 23 **A. The documents we started talking about, in terms of**
 24 **the problem profiles, are strategic documents. The**
 25 **documents you have just mentioned now are more --**

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<p>1 Q. Bring up the next page as well. We have the missing 2 persons reports at paragraph 1.30 and the monthly 3 vulnerability reports at 1.32. Carry on, please, 4 Mr Richards.</p> <p>5 A. So the documents you're referring to now contain more 6 tactical detail and they're produced primarily to aid 7 the operational activities of neighbourhood policing 8 teams and local sector patrol in neighbourhoods. They 9 are really intended for those who take part in patrol 10 activity to focus efforts towards vulnerable victims 11 across a wide range of vulnerabilities ranging from 12 domestic abuse to CSE, but it also touches on missing 13 persons and it also identifies locations and 14 perpetrators where relevant. So that really -- those 15 two are documents that really do assist our tasking 16 processes in terms of assisting our operational staff on 17 the front line to do patrol and work within our 18 communities.</p> <p>19 Q. In terms of categorising the child sexual exploitation 20 of children by an organised network, how is that 21 definition approached?</p> <p>22 A. So the -- I would --</p> <p>23 Q. Perhaps I could take you to one bit of your evidence. 24 This might help you. SWP000151_016, top of the page, 25 paragraph 1.49. The position of the police, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 South Wales Police, is that, as of 30 October 2019, 2 there were no live cases of CSE by organised networks 3 being investigated by the police. My question is, 4 really, how have you defined organised networks to 5 return a nil return, effectively, in that paragraph?</p> <p>6 A. So that would have been, again, as a result of 7 the analytical work, where those incidents that we spoke 8 about earlier -- I think it's the 57 incidents that were 9 spoken about -- we would have considered whether or not 10 they were akin to -- they were akin to the activities of 11 organised crime groups.</p> <p>12 Q. So, for these purposes, the approach or definition that 13 is taken to an OCG, as we have heard it mentioned, is 14 what's being used; is that right?</p> <p>15 A. Similar to that, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. I think you're aware of the definition that the inquiry 17 is adopting for the purposes of this phrase, which is 18 rather different, isn't it, to an organised criminal 19 group or an OCG?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. I don't think I need to bring it up, but can I just 22 confirm through you that you have also provided evidence 23 later in your witness statement about the regional CSAE 24 meetings, which I think are a tactical meeting that 25 takes place each quarter. Then there are -- please tell</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>
<p>1 me if I have got this wrong -- regional CSE strategic 2 threat group meetings which are held every quarter as 3 well, but that is something different. Have I got that 4 broadly right?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, there are threat group meetings and the meeting 6 that you spoke about first, that was like a regional 7 practitioners' group.</p> <p>8 Q. Are they more about the disruption element or are they 9 also about profiling or is it a bit of both?</p> <p>10 A. It is a bit of both. They pull together all four 11 practitioners from all four Welsh forces. In content, 12 they have a relationship with some national meetings 13 which share the -- the contents of which are shared on 14 an all-Wales basis. We talk about best practice, 15 trends, criminal patterns, and sometimes other 16 operational issues such as case work or investigations.</p> <p>17 Q. Can I bring up, please, SWP000151_040, please, 18 paragraph 3.21. This is a similar issue to what we just 19 looked at, in that you were asked to confirm whether 20 there was any data to support the suggestion that there 21 were any incidences of CSE related to gangs in the 22 Swansea area, and you provided the answer that there was 23 no data to support that; is that right?</p> <p>24 A. No, there is no data to support that, but it's something 25 we are vigilant around.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>	<p>1 Q. Do you think there are issues with the data if one is 2 using -- put it this way: if one used the inquiry's 3 definition of "network" rather than organised criminal 4 group or gang, is it likely that that would generate 5 a different answer to those questions?</p> <p>6 A. I'm not sure what the answer to that is, I'm sorry. 7 I think, when you look at the size of the samples, and 8 you look at the challenges around disclosure and 9 discovery, I would say there is a likelihood that there 10 are organised criminal networks that we haven't 11 discovered.</p> <p>12 Q. I think you've been referred to the inquiry's 13 definition. You think you'd accept that that's more 14 broad than the OCG definition; is that right?</p> <p>15 A. I think so, but it is something I would like to discuss 16 with my analytical experts.</p> <p>17 Q. Finally from this part of the evidence on profiling, in 18 your second statement, I think it is, at SCC000550_005, 19 paragraph 21, please, going just a little bit over the 20 page into 22, please, Danny, you have given some data 21 here about the breakdown of the number of young people 22 in Swansea who were considered to be at risk of or 23 subject to sexual exploitation.</p> <p>24 I think I may have given you a wrong reference. 25 That doesn't seem to be correct, sorry. It is internal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 page_005, Danny. Paragraph 21. And paragraph 22, the 2 next page, please.</p> <p>3 If we scroll in on that table, we see 33 young 4 people in Swansea considered to be at risk of or subject 5 to sexual exploitation. These young people were either 6 looked after when the risk was identified or 7 subsequently became looked after, and we can see the 8 ages there and the ethnicities. Do you want to draw out 9 any themes from this chart? You can see the totals are 10 at the top of the next page. We can see the totals by 11 gender and by ethnicity.</p> <p>12 A. I think the only thing for me is the clear indication 13 about the bias in terms of gender and age group.</p> <p>14 Q. In that we are seeing here -- I think the figures across 15 the top are showing females -- the white British females 16 is 1, 16 and 10, and then towards the bottom, females of 17 another ethnic group, 1 and 3. Then there is 1 male 18 overall. Is that right?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Of the numbers here, the vast majority are female?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. So we can see the breakdown of that figure of 33. Thank 23 you very much. We can take that down.</p> <p>24 I think the only other part of this statement, 25 please, is if we can bring up internal page _014,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 paragraph 78. You refer here to overall figures that 2 suggest, Mr Richards, between 2018 and 2019 a drop in 3 CSE cases. You offer there an explanation for that 4 figure. Do you want to just help us understand what the 5 issues around this drop in cases are?</p> <p>6 A. So the reduction in numbers I think has caused some 7 consternation between all agencies, particularly Swansea 8 City Council and South Wales Police, and it is something 9 that we have considered. I think one of the reduction 10 aspects may well have been that we have become more 11 precise with regard to our flagging activities. So we 12 have placed the responsibility for flagging within the 13 dedicated CSE team. There is obviously a link between 14 CSE classification and flagging and analytical 15 activities and performance. So I would be very cautious 16 with linking that to a genuine reduction. I think we 17 may have, actually -- have a more accurate 18 representation, but I would be reluctant to say it 19 represents a genuine reduction in the demand that we 20 face.</p> <p>21 Q. Is one of the issues that you refer to in this paragraph 22 here a distinction to be drawn between child sexual 23 exploitation and a more general title of child 24 exploitation, and your suggestion here I think is that 25 young people who have previously been considered to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>
<p>1 in the child sexual exploitation arena might now be 2 considered in the child criminal exploitation arena. Is 3 that part of the issue?</p> <p>4 A. I think there is sometimes a difficulty in dissecting 5 the nature of exploitation, whether it be CSE, CSA or 6 criminal exploitation. Again, we referred to earlier 7 that figure of 415 occurrences with regard to CSE. 8 I dare say that was probably a representation of some of 9 those challenges and people using local qualifiers just 10 to try and be vigilant in capturing CSE that might not 11 actually exist. So it is confusing.</p> <p>12 Q. Thank you. We can take that document down now. I would 13 just like to give the panel a flavour, if I may, of some 14 of the underlying documents to give them a sense of it.</p> <p>15 I think if we can go, perhaps, first of all, to 16 SWP000080, just to give the panel a broad flavour, 17 Mr Richards. This is the problem profile for the whole 18 of South Wales Police, "Child exploitation and abuse 19 problem profile". We can see that from the front page.</p> <p>20 We can see within it that that includes a range of 21 different types of child abuse and exploitation and it 22 includes -- if we go to internal page _013, please -- 23 a broad summary over five or six pages, perhaps -- 24 around six pages. It is a broad summary of what 25 South Wales Police generally understands the CSE threat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>	<p>1 to be. Is that right?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. The panel can just scroll through it, but it has 4 observations about the current threat. If you go over 5 the page, please, Danny, to 15, we can see that it deals 6 with the temporal factors, so that's both the time of 7 day and the time of year when these incidents appear to 8 occur, is geographical scope. So we have seen 9 divided-up figures by the BCU. Who is at risk, so 10 indicators of those children who are particularly at 11 risk. And then, over the page, what is known about who 12 the perpetrators are. And then, finally, what is known 13 about what contact there is with police.</p> <p>14 Is there anything else on the South Wales general 15 profile you want to draw to the panel's attention?</p> <p>16 A. I think participating in the inquiry has caused us to -- 17 has provoked us into discussing how we would do this if 18 we had to do it again. So issues around disability, 19 ethnicity, would be considerations we would -- we 20 wouldn't seek to include. Although I think in future we 21 would try to capture opportunities to make links to our 22 analytical work around county lines and missing people.</p> <p>23 Q. We have a similar but then shorter document, I think, in 24 relation to Swansea specifically, SWP000079, please. 25 This is, again, the problem profile for Swansea itself,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 with child exploitation and abuse, again with different 2 sections, and we go to internal page 4, please, and you 3 will see between pages 4 and 5 specific focus on CSE 4 within Swansea over these two pages. 5 There is separate treatment given to child criminal 6 exploitation. If you see, that's a separate part of 7 page 4. But then the recommendations at the top of 8 page 5 deal with them both together. Do you want to 9 just tell us what these recommendations are around those 10 two categories of incident? 11 A. Yeah. I think the highlight within those 12 recommendations is the reference to a child criminal 13 exploitation flag, which we have recently introduced. 14 I think, again, the -- introducing the concept of child 15 criminal exploitation places the need to raise awareness 16 within all practitioners, particularly operational 17 front-line practitioners, and there's a premium being 18 placed, again, in consistency with CSE, on lateral 19 thinking and seeking to identify the needs of the victim 20 in order to establish the full context and the "what 21 if" -- the "so what" questions. 22 There is a reference in the document to the 23 St Giles Trust and Barnardo's. Obviously Barnardo's are 24 key allies for us with regard to CSE and the 25 St Giles Trust has been commissioned within South Wales</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 Police to perform outreach work with regard to county 2 lines and vulnerability in particular. 3 Q. Just a couple more documents, if I may. Can I bring up 4 SWP000077. This is a different kind of document from 5 the regional organised crime unit. This is 6 from September of last year and it is a sort of bulletin 7 or update, if I can call it that, around child sexual 8 abuse or exploitation within this regional organised 9 crime unit. We can see within this that, for example, 10 on internal page 7, one of the things that is done is 11 circulation of a list of perpetrator flagged individuals 12 from that particular month. Do you want to just help us 13 about how this process operates, please, Mr Richards? 14 A. So CSE is a regional priority, just as it is a priority 15 for South Wales Police. So a lot of the conversations 16 on a regional tasking process are seamless, actually. 17 This is an indicator of the information sharing across 18 Wales in terms of force. References to -- actually, 19 it's South Wales and Gwent. I think there is quite 20 a difference in the figures that reflects the internal 21 changes that we have brought in with regard to 22 tightening up our assignation of CSE flags. 23 Q. This document is from, I think, September 2019. Sorry 24 to sort of jump back in time. Can I bring up 25 a document, please, from 2018, just to ask for your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>
<p>1 comment on it. SWP000093_003. These are some minutes 2 from the regional tactical group from February 2018. 3 Just scroll in, please, on the middle part of this page, 4 just underneath the action where it says "The 5 discussion". There is a note here that the discussion 6 at the regional tactical group highlighted a gap in 7 information flow between operational PPU teams and 8 central teams. Therefore, unsure of the current CSE 9 activity picture. That, as I have indicated, is 10 from February 2018. What uncertainty was that 11 reflecting in February 2018, Mr Richards? 12 A. I'm not sure, to be honest with you, but I am confident 13 that our establishment of a permanent resource within 14 HQ PPU, who has a permanent responsibility around CSE 15 analytical work incidents and performance, has resolved 16 that. 17 Q. Finally on the documents, please, can I bring up the 18 online sexual offending profile from August of last 19 year, SWP000078. The first page, just to see the 20 headline, please. We can see that this is then, 21 I think, a South Wales Police, not just for Swansea, but 22 it is specifically about online sexual offending. If we 23 go to internal page 4, please, there are some key 24 findings about this issue, the nature of the offenders, 25 the nature of the victims, the nature of the frequently</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>	<p>1 used platforms. 2 Then it suggests this, that the Western BCU had the 3 highest level of reported offences of this type, which 4 is where we find Swansea; is that right? 5 A. Yes, that's correct. 6 Q. Is there anything else in particular about the online 7 offending profile that you wanted to draw to my 8 attention? 9 A. I think the bullet point that makes reference to the 10 diversity of digital and social media sites that 11 contributes to the growth of the problem. 12 Q. We can take that down, please. Can I move then to the 13 related topic of disruption of offenders. Just perhaps 14 by reference to your earlier statement, just to bring 15 that up to assist you, please, it's SWP000151_012, 16 paragraph 1.36. You have broadly summarised there, 17 I think, Mr Richards, the different sorts of disruptive 18 tactics that are brought to bear by South Wales Police. 19 You work, I think, with the practice lead for disruption 20 within the council; is that right? There is a practice 21 lead for disruption of child sexual exploitation within 22 the council? 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. Do you want to give the panel the headlines of what 25 disruptive tactics are particularly relevant from your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

1 perspective?

2 **A. In terms of this paragraph?**

3 Q. I think, in fairness, it goes 1.36 right through to

4 1.41. Perhaps we can just bring them all up. You talk

5 about the intelligence packages being disseminated,

6 a commitment to investigation of all reports. But what

7 other sort of disruptive tactics are relevant here?

8 **A. This activity primarily relates to a covert policing**

9 **tactic that's quite recently been set up and hosted by**

10 **the regional organised crime unit. It has a proactive**

11 **ability in terms of interdicting online paedophile**

12 **activity. Sometimes this can be intelligence led,**

13 **tasked accordingly. It will involve the deployment of**

14 **highly trained covert online undercover officers, who**

15 **will assume the identity of a child in a bid to --**

16 Q. I'm sure it is me. I wasn't intending to focus the

17 question deliberately on online offending in particular.

18 This is more generally now about disruption of child

19 sexual exploitation at a wider level. I'm sorry if

20 I have misled you.

21 **A. Okay. So the -- I think the starting point is the**

22 **activity around our front-line operational staff, in**

23 **terms of the activities of public protection units and**

24 **criminal investigation departments working in**

25 **partnership with front-line patrol officers and**

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1 identify individuals, certain individuals, who are

2 considered individuals of concern, are individuals who

3 then might be referred for consideration of issuing

4 a child abduction warning notice, a CAWN. Do you want

5 to tell us a little bit about that process within

6 South Wales Police?

7 **A. We do have a very close relationship with**

8 **Social Services in Swansea, particularly through the**

9 **activities of the dedicated CSE team, who are co-located**

10 **with the missing person team, under the supervision of**

11 **a public protection detective sergeant in Swansea**

12 **Central in Western BCU.**

13 **The CAWN is a child abduction warning notice.**

14 **I think sometimes there's an emphasis placed on the fact**

15 **that it doesn't have a statutory footing. But for us**

16 **it's a valuable disruption tool with regard to**

17 **responding to situations where we have clear evidence**

18 **that a vulnerable child, or a child, has been hosted**

19 **inappropriately within a location by an adult. This is**

20 **normally considered within the context of a threat of**

21 **CSE.**

22 **So I could go into the tactical details, if you**

23 **require that.**

24 Q. I'm not sure you need to give us that detail. But we

25 are grateful for it.

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1 **neighbourhood policing teams, relying heavily on not**

2 **just our relationship with partner agencies, but sharing**

3 **information, both internal and with partner agencies, to**

4 **ensure that opportunities to exploit intelligence are**

5 **maximised. That relies on internally well-educated**

6 **tasking systems, and that's the -- the control strategy**

7 **is associated with our force plans which are contained**

8 **within the crime and disorder plan for the force, which**

9 **incorporates child sexual exploitation. It has line of**

10 **sight all the way down to daily tasking processes that**

11 **support police officers before they go on patrol.**

12 Q. I think we can perhaps just bring up, please, internal

13 pages _016 and _017 to assist with this. I think you

14 explain there that the force uses the Home Office's

15 disruption toolkit, which has six different areas in

16 which disruption activity can take place. Is that

17 right?

18 **A. Yes. So the toolkit contains six specific areas. That**

19 **includes reference to alternative tactics, victim**

20 **support, human trafficking and a range of tactical**

21 **options. That includes focus on locations that we use**

22 **as part of our normal business in terms of engaging in**

23 **CSE.**

24 Q. You explained earlier in the statement that you work

25 with children's services, children's social care, to

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1 Can I just complete this bit of the evidence,

2 please, by bringing up the council's witness statement

3 on this issue. This is the statement from Mr Rees dated

4 7 January of this year. It's SCC000550_008,

5 paragraphs 32 to 36. It goes a little bit over the

6 page, please. Just to confirm from your understanding,

7 Mr Richards, that the police officers from your force

8 (interference) exploitation, meet regularly -- I think

9 it says weekly -- around missing children and that there

10 is then a relationship between the council practice lead

11 and the police on this issue?

12 **A. So the practice lead of Swansea Social Services speaks**

13 **on a daily basis with the detective sergeant who**

14 **I referred to in Swansea Central Police Station and has**

15 **an extremely close working relationship.**

16 Q. I think in your very first witness statement -- we have

17 already looked at paragraph 1.49. I don't need to bring

18 it up. In terms of disruption, your answer to that

19 question was, as at 30 October 2019, there were no live

20 cases of CSE by organised networks being investigated by

21 South Wales Police. So that is -- as a matter of fact,

22 therefore, there is no disruption activity or

23 investigation going on in relation to CSE by organised

24 networks as defined. Is that right?

25 **A. Yes, there is no reactive investigation, and there's**

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1 **a great deal of proactive intelligence development.**
 2 Q. Can I ask you some questions now about a different
 3 topic, please, about empathy and concern for child
 4 victims. I think you've been asked to consider
 5 a witness statement from the EYST -- I think we
 6 understand it is pronounced "East" -- which is the
 7 organisation that provides support to the BME community
 8 groups in your area. That's the statement from
 9 Shehla Khan. Have you had a chance to look at that
 10 statement?
 11 **A. I have seen it.**
 12 Q. I think, although it is not very clear what particular
 13 case is being referred to, there is a suggestion that
 14 sometimes there isn't always -- forgive me. Let me
 15 bring up the statement in question. Can we bring up
 16 INQ005914_002. If I just put the paragraphs up on the
 17 screen, that might be best. It is paragraphs 9 and 10,
 18 please. Can you see what's said in relation to empathy
 19 and concern in these paragraphs? I make clear, we don't
 20 have the specifics, but an example is given here of
 21 a case where the writer of the statement supported
 22 a young female victim. When she was interviewed by
 23 a male police officer, she was made to feel very
 24 uncomfortable and guilty. She did put in a complaint
 25 about this behaviour. Even though we were told he'd

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1 **I think, in terms of diversity, it flows through the**
 2 **code of ethics, which is continually referred to within**
 3 **our training processes. We have made efforts to**
 4 **introduce training with regard to unconscious bias, and**
 5 **in terms of continual improvement, we recently put steps**
 6 **in place to ensure improvement with regard to**
 7 **honour-based violence.**
 8 **So the problems that are elicited in this statement**
 9 **are potential problems that are recognised but I think**
 10 **there are steps that are in place within our routine**
 11 **training processes to ensure that seeking out the needs**
 12 **of -- the victim needs around some of those issues that**
 13 **are demonstrated are enshrined within our training.**
 14 **In terms of recruit training, we now ensure that all**
 15 **new recruits to the force have training with regard to**
 16 **CSE in particular, and adverse child experiences.**
 17 Q. Can I just pick up a few more discrete points related to
 18 this topic. One of the issues you dealt with in your
 19 first witness statement -- SWP000151_010,
 20 paragraph 1.34, but we don't need to bring it up. You
 21 describe here a pilot around -- in fact, let's bring it
 22 up because this might orientate you a bit more. It
 23 covers a range of issues.
 24 This is about the issue of -- if we go to the bottom
 25 bullet point -- in particular, there is investigative

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1 received training on grooming, this training did not
 2 reflect in his behaviour or working practices and that
 3 had some consequences for other clients of theirs. So
 4 our proposal for improvement would be to increase the
 5 quality and maybe quantity of training for police
 6 officers deal with CSE complainants and victims and to
 7 ensure that the same gender police officers are always
 8 used to carry out initial interviews with complainants.
 9 As I say, we have no details of the specifics of
 10 that case, but do you want to respond to what's broadly
 11 said there?
 12 **A. So obviously when I read that statement those sentences,**
 13 **the paragraphs, were of considerable interest, and,**
 14 **I must say, surprise. From research -- I'm not sure**
 15 **it's been established that that case was actually**
 16 **a South Wales Police case, but it did cause me to speak**
 17 **to representatives of our investigative training team.**
 18 **I'm confident that within our investigative training**
 19 **practices we have, for a long time, placed an emphasis**
 20 **within our interview training on ensuring that the**
 21 **officers have responsibility to clearly seek out the**
 22 **needs of every victim and witness in order to maximise**
 23 **the opportunities for achieving best evidence. So the**
 24 **content of this paragraph clearly is inconsistent with**
 25 **that.**

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1 work going on about a range of issues but one of these
 2 is about not criminalising young people. Do you
 3 remember this part of your earlier evidence?
 4 **A. Yes.**
 5 Q. Just related to that, I don't know if we can bring it
 6 up, I think we can, just bear with me a second. Let me
 7 just make sure what this is. I think, just bear with me
 8 a second -- I just need to double-check I can bring this
 9 up. Just bear with me. I'm not sure I need to
 10 actually. You will be familiar with this document. It
 11 is a poster, Mr Richards, a child-related poster that is
 12 about trying to engage with young people and it is
 13 a one-page poster that the police have recently provided
 14 that talks about not criminalising children involved
 15 in -- for child sexual exploitation. Are you familiar
 16 with that poster?
 17 **A. I think it is a poster that relates to the UN Charter on**
 18 **Children's Rights.**
 19 Q. Exactly that one, yes. The question, really, is whether
 20 or not South Wales Police does have a policy against
 21 criminalising those children who have been victims of
 22 child sexual exploitation?
 23 **A. There is a cross-reference here between the spirit of**
 24 **that paragraph and the missing pilot that's really been**
 25 **acted with regard to missing children in the**

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1 **Western force in terms of, we recognise there are both**
 2 **legal constraints, ethical constraints, criminalisation**
 3 **constraints, where we are at risk not only of behaving**
 4 **in an unlawful way, but probably in alienating children.**
 5 Q. I have a couple of questions about the child -- just
 6 bear with me a second. Forgive me. I've got, I think,
 7 two questions, please, about the child advocacy service
 8 and one about county lines, but I think it is shortly
 9 time for a break. I will just try to do those three
 10 questions, if I may, and then we can take our break.
 11 In your first witness statement you refer to the use
 12 of child advocates by South Wales Police. Has this
 13 approach contributed to reducing the incidence of CSE in
 14 the area and do you think a similar scheme should be
 15 implemented elsewhere?
 16 **A. I'm not sure about reducing the incidence, but it has**
 17 **given us the ability to improve our information**
 18 **intelligence gathering, it's given us the ability to**
 19 **engage victims of CSE in a more appropriate way, and**
 20 **it's also facilitated our ability to consider other**
 21 **services and other solutions with regard to CSE.**
 22 **In terms of it being adopted elsewhere, for us it's**
 23 **probably one of the main components about how we have**
 24 **transformed our organisational culture in terms of CSE.**
 25 **So you've touched on the installation of CSE teams --**

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1 data to support the suggestion that there is
 2 gang-related CSE within the Swansea area. Do you accept
 3 that, notwithstanding the lack of data, the increased
 4 involvement of children in county lines activities
 5 increases the likelihood that those children will be
 6 subject to CSE?
 7 **A. Yes. If you work on the assumption that disclosure and**
 8 **discovery of CSE is difficult, if you adopt the context**
 9 **of -- if you overlay a context of county lines to that,**
 10 **you increase those challenges.**
 11 **I think county lines, in any area, will bring with**
 12 **it a host of criminal exploitative tactics. Inevitably,**
 13 **if you have a county line operating, there will be an**
 14 **increased likelihood of CSE, yes.**
 15 MS HILL: I do have some further questions for you, but I am
 16 asked to invite you to take our mid-afternoon break now.
 17 Perhaps we can break for 15 minutes, and so until just
 18 before 3.25 pm.
 19 **A. Thank you.**
 20 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 3.25 pm.
 21 MS HILL: Thank you, chair.
 22 (3.07 pm)
 23 (A short break)
 24 (3.25 pm)
 25 THE CHAIR: Ms Hill?

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1 **that's one. There's been widespread training -- that's**
 2 **a second one. But the use of CSE advocates has been**
 3 **absolutely crucial in our ability to better engage,**
 4 **using independent personalities of victims of CSE. For**
 5 **us, it's been a huge success and we rely on it extremely**
 6 **heavily.**
 7 Q. Should the child advocacy service be involved in
 8 strategic action with the police child sexual
 9 exploitation team, particularly in circumstances where
 10 victims may be distrustful of the police and social
 11 workers? Is there a strategic role for them?
 12 **A. A strategic role? I think it's really important, and**
 13 **I'm glad that our CSE advocates are co-located with both**
 14 **our missing teams and our CSE teams, which I see as**
 15 **a tactical benefit, and I think we get great benefit**
 16 **from them joining in multi-agency conferences around**
 17 **CSE.**
 18 **Historically, we have benefited from other**
 19 **Barnardo's-related material, such as the SERAF tool. So**
 20 **I think wherever you can involve them operationally --**
 21 **I'm not sure about strategically, but operationally,**
 22 **they give us massive benefit.**
 23 Q. My final question, please, for the moment is, going
 24 back, I'm afraid, to the data -- I'm sorry, I should
 25 have put this before -- you have said that there is no

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1 MS HILL: Thank you. I'd like to move to another topic, if
 2 I may, Mr Richards, and that's the issue of missing
 3 children. SWP000151_008-009, please. You have set out,
 4 at paragraphs 130 to 134, if we can bring those pages up
 5 on screen, please, information about these quarterly
 6 missing person reports. What are the common locations
 7 from where children have absconded or left, Mr Richards?
 8 **A. In terms of premises --**
 9 Q. Or types of premises or particular premises?
 10 **A. I think the one that stands out is obviously residential**
 11 **children's homes.**
 12 Q. You have given some information, I think, at the end of
 13 paragraph 130, about the most recent, as it then was,
 14 missing persons report from October 2019. Between
 15 1 July and 30 September of last year, 622 missing person
 16 occurrences were reported within Western BCU. Of those,
 17 401 related to persons under 18, and there were 170
 18 unique persons under 18 linked to those 401 occurrences.
 19 Is that 170 children but 401 missing incidents?
 20 **A. Yes. I think the figures there are dominated by young**
 21 **children, but particularly so the repeat incidents.**
 22 Q. You have provided some further information at internal
 23 page 40, please, of document 151, paragraph 4.1 through
 24 to 4.4. What you were asked to look at here is any link
 25 between someone being missing and their CSE risk.

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<p>1 I believe that's what you are being asked to look at 2 here. You say at paragraph 4.2: 3 "All reports of missing people sit them in 4 a continuum of risk from no apparent risk through to 5 high risk cases that require immediate intensive action. 6 However, the definition of absent is not used by 7 South Wales Police. I set out below the number of 8 children that went missing in the Swansea area in each 9 of the past two years." 10 So those are the numbers of children. Help us with 11 the difference between the nominals figure -- I think 12 that is the number of individual children -- and CSE 13 nominals, which I think is the number of children who 14 have been already identified as at risk of CSE within 15 that cohort. Is that right? 16 A. Yes, I would say those CSE nominals are nominals who 17 carry a CSE flag. 18 Q. If we go further into page 41, please, you have broken 19 those figures down a little bit further, I think, by 20 quarter. The repeat nominals in the last 365 days, help 21 us with that, please. Is that the number of children 22 who have gone missing more than once? 23 A. Yes. That's correct. 24 Q. We can see within those cohorts again the CSE nominals 25 are those to whom in your crime recording system a CSE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 flag has been applied. Is that right? 2 A. Yes, that's correct. 3 Q. Going, please, to Return Home Interviews, internal 4 page 44. They are conducted, I think, largely by the 5 Barnardo's advocates; is that right? 6 A. The majority of Return Home Interviews are conducted by 7 operational police officers. However, when there is 8 a heightened, intelligence-led CSE context, the 9 Barnardo's advocate would often be tasked. 10 Q. You've explained, I think, in fairness, at 11 paragraph 4.11, that the children he or she debriefs -- 12 is that another word for a Return Home Interview in 13 Wales? 14 A. Yes, it's -- the debrief forms part of the Return Home 15 Interview, yes. 16 Q. So the ones -- I think what you say is the children who 17 are on the CSE Protocol, are they the same as the 18 children with the CSE flag? 19 A. They would be, yes. 20 Q. So those children persistent MISPERs, children who are 21 going missing regularly, or children who have engaged in 22 risky behaviour while missing, they have an interview 23 with the Barnardo's advocate. Then to what extent is 24 the intelligence or information gathered in those 25 interviews then used by the police?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>
<p>1 A. Obviously the CSE advocate is co-located with the CSE 2 team and the missing person team. The tasking would 3 be -- would result in a CSE advocate being deployed and 4 the CSE advocate would complete a Barnardo's format to 5 a Return Home Interview. That would be provided to 6 Social Services, but it would also be provided to the 7 police. The CSE supervisor would ensure that an 8 intelligence asset was tasked with dissecting the 9 content of that interview document in order to maximise 10 any intelligence opportunities. 11 The basis of the Return Home Interview would be 12 assessed in terms of its value in educating the 13 multi-agency processes, which may well be a multi-agency 14 child sexual exploitation meeting, and, as a result of 15 the assessment of that document, the CSE sergeant will 16 ask questions around -- well, will be responsible for 17 making sure that there is an adequate management plan in 18 response to the content of the document that will set 19 out threats, objectives that need to be achieved, 20 ownership of the scenario, the occurrence, but also 21 tactics to be used, and that's part of the force policy. 22 Q. I think you've explained later in your witness statement 23 that there isn't any particular residential home within 24 Swansea that has accounted for a significant number of 25 missing episodes, but you give one example -- let's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>	<p>1 scroll in at 4.14 in this statement, page 45. There was 2 one home, I think, that had been identified by the 3 police as a potential -- you describe it as "missing 4 hotspot". Tell us what the police did around that, 5 please? 6 A. In such circumstances -- as part of normal business, the 7 missing person coordinator would routinely visit that 8 premises. Obviously, in terms of an escalation of 9 a problem at that address, there would be -- I should 10 stress here, I'm not making reference to that particular 11 paragraph and that particular premises. I should stress 12 that I'm telling you what I would expect to have 13 happened. 14 The local sector inspector would have ownership of 15 that problem. That premises would feature in the 16 missing person document that we have talked about. 17 There would be dialogue with the management at that 18 address with regard to a jointly agreed solution with 19 regard to dealing with the problem, and consideration 20 would also be given to the fact of any regulatory 21 issues. 22 So we have a member of staff embedded within the 23 Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales, and one 24 consideration would be whether or not there are 25 intelligence sharing or escalation opportunities with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

1 **regard to that regulatory body.**
 2 Q. You were asked some questions in your written statement
 3 about the observations that the HMICFRS have made on
 4 South Wales' performance on this sort of issue. Can
 5 I ask to be brought up, please, SWP000151_068, and
 6 scroll down, please, to paragraph 8.10 through to 8.11.
 7 Going back, I think, a little in time to 2016, there
 8 were concerns expressed then by HMICFRS that in some
 9 cases clear CSE risks were not identified at the
 10 earliest opportunity, and there were examples of
 11 children still being reported missing a significant
 12 number of times with limited evidence of early
 13 intervention. I think you've set out in your witness
 14 evidence how the force has responded to that, but do you
 15 want to just deal with that now briefly?
 16 **A. This feedback from HMICFRS was very important in us**
 17 **considering our improvement plan and what we needed to**
 18 **put in place. So in terms of uplift in resources, we**
 19 **have talked about the introduction of a CSE team, we**
 20 **have talked about the introduction of a missing person**
 21 **team under the supervision of a sergeant co-located.**
 22 **This is also linked to the involvement of the**
 23 **introduction of CSE advocates. But in support of all**
 24 **that, we have also introduced a performance framework**
 25 **and a review framework that involves local and strategic**

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1 **the BCUs, including Western, it's very much docked into**
 2 **neighbourhood policing, specially trained police**
 3 **community support officers, PCSOs, who work with**
 4 **complementary early help teams within the local**
 5 **authorities, such as the early help team in Swansea. So**
 6 **it is a more holistic approach that's based on**
 7 **a cultural change in our sensitivity and our awareness**
 8 **of the needs of vulnerable people. That's shaped our**
 9 **attitudes to how we go about supporting them when we**
 10 **engage them.**
 11 Q. To try to bring some of this more up to date, if I look
 12 at a document from January 2020 -- I don't need to bring
 13 this up, actually. It is a document that's the minutes
 14 of a child sexual abuse round table from January of this
 15 year to do with the Children's Commissioner. You will
 16 be familiar with the contents I'm sure, because it says
 17 this, that the Welsh Government is commissioning
 18 Dr Hallett to develop a pilot training programme on
 19 responding to children and young people who are absent
 20 or missing. The pilot will be in two local authority
 21 areas, multi-agency but aimed at residential providers.
 22 It was highlighted that South Wales Police will be
 23 undertaking a four-week missing children's pilot around
 24 the response of the police that is likely to have an
 25 impact on the role of Social Services, foster carers and

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1 **management considering and assessing problems associated**
 2 **with the demand and challenges associated with the**
 3 **demand. But, importantly, the activity of those teams**
 4 **has tightened up and ensured a greater coverage in terms**
 5 **of our capability to ensure that we don't miss**
 6 **opportunities, the sort of opportunities that they are**
 7 **talking about there. But we have also put into**
 8 **commission some corporate review based in the public**
 9 **protection unit that's widened to the activities of CSE**
 10 **teams on BCUs. Those CSE teams are absolutely**
 11 **meticulous in monitoring new occurrences that involve**
 12 **CSE and missing children but also dealing with flags,**
 13 **dealing with the activities of those children who are**
 14 **repeatedly coming to the attention of the police through**
 15 **a variety of different occurrences, but also in terms of**
 16 **dealing with the problem, making sure that we work**
 17 **closer with partners to deal with the challenges with**
 18 **a wider perspective, and there's a reference in that**
 19 **paragraph to adverse child experiences and early action**
 20 **together. So that very much complements the work we**
 21 **have done as part of Operation Liberty in ensuring the**
 22 **whole workforce, the whole population of South Wales**
 23 **Police, is more vividly aware of vulnerability,**
 24 **including CSE, and the two do dovetail.**
 25 **The early action together piece involved, within all**

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1 residential providers when a child is absent or goes
 2 missing. Is that piece of work still continuing,
 3 Mr Richards?
 4 **A. As a result of the introduction of a performance**
 5 **framework, we became more aware of changes in our**
 6 **demand, and we found that our missing person demand**
 7 **increased by about 40 per cent in a three-year period**
 8 **following 2015. That was dominated by a child**
 9 **demographic, particularly with regard to children in**
 10 **care and repeat instances of missing children who,**
 11 **again, were linked to care. That resulted in**
 12 **a multi-agency critical incident that paved the way for**
 13 **the agreement on the introductory pilot that was based**
 14 **primarily in the west part of the force, including**
 15 **Swansea, but also in the mid-Glamorgan part of the force**
 16 **involving what was previously known as Central BCU**
 17 **division.**
 18 **That was enacted for a four-week period in February**
 19 **this year and, as a result, there were some marked**
 20 **benefits, which included a 62 per cent reduction in the**
 21 **number of times that police officers have to deploy to**
 22 **recover missing people and take them home. Obviously**
 23 **one of the principles we were looking at -- the**
 24 **principal benefits we were looking at achieving was**
 25 **disengaging ourselves from escorting children home and**

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<p>1 alienating them, but, as importantly, ensuring that 2 those who were responsible for running residential care 3 homes took parental responsibility as per the all-Wales 4 guidelines for missing children. That was, again, 5 a second key success of the pilot. 6 So the pilot is over, but we are currently in 7 a stage where we are seeking to recruit eight permanent 8 police staff, vulnerable person investigators, who would 9 work on a shift basis between the hours of roughly 10 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock in the morning, who would be 11 able to continually risk assess incidences involving 12 missing children and come to a conclusion about levels 13 of risk in partnership with on-duty or out-of-hours 14 Social Services staff, whilst monitoring events and 15 continuing to engage those people who have parental 16 responsibility within residential care homes. 17 Q. A few more points on this topic. Can I put up, please, 18 the results of the evaluation of the child advocates 19 scheme that goes back, I think, to 2018, but for 20 completeness, SWP000153. This is a document that dates 21 back to January 2018. It is an evaluation of child 22 sexual exploitation awareness, preventative strategies 23 and support for children, their families and carers 24 within South Wales Police. If you go to pages 18 and 25 19, for completeness, the evidence from the review</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 suggests that child advocates are providing a service 2 that is both beneficial to children and many other 3 stakeholders. The high number of missing children means 4 that cases have to prioritise based on risk. There is 5 an opinion that earlier intervention and prevention 6 could reduce the higher risk group through early 7 identification of ACEs and the provision of support. So 8 a broadly positive report -- is that right -- about the 9 child advocate scheme? 10 A. Yes, that's correct. 11 Q. In relation to this -- a couple of very specific 12 questions to put to you. In your witness statement at 13 paragraph 7.48, you gave an example -- this is perhaps 14 more about partnership working with children's homes, 15 I think, and indeed with the council -- of where the 16 power under section -- I think it is 44 of 17 the Children Act to find suitable alternative 18 accommodation for a child at risk of CSE and to ensure 19 the child was safeguarded was used despite the refusal 20 of the city and the council to initiate proceedings. 21 Can you explain a little bit more about how the CSA team 22 was able to use that legislation to protect the child? 23 A. Are we making reference to police protection powers? 24 Q. It's paragraph 7.48 of your witness statement. We can 25 bring that up, if that is going to help you. I think it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>
<p>1 is SWP000151_062. 2 A. Yes, section 46 of the Children's Act. 3 Q. Sorry, it is my eyesight, I'm sorry. Actually, no, it 4 says, at the end: 5 "As a result of the Swansea CSE team intervention 6 and their influence over the use of the section 44 7 power, the local authority found suitable alternative 8 accommodation ..." 9 But section 46 is referred to at the beginning, so 10 I think it is 46. 11 A. Yes. I think I'm familiar with that case. 12 Q. So the question I have agreed to put to you is this: can 13 you elaborate on how the team was able to use that 14 legislation to protect the child? 15 A. If it is the case I think it is, we were left in 16 a position where there was nowhere for that vulnerable 17 child to go. There was conflict with regard to 18 different family members. That power involves the 19 supervision of an inspector to initiate section 46, 20 which are emergency police protection powers, which 21 gives us the ability, albeit short ability -- I think it 22 is a 24-hour period -- to look after that child 23 ourselves, until suitable accommodation is made -- 24 found. 25 Q. Similarly, on this topic of partnership working, you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>	<p>1 state at paragraph 8.9 of your witness statement, 2 internal page 68 of the same statement: 3 "The child sexual exploitation teams across the 4 force continue to make inroads with care homes and, 5 along with the independent CSE advocates, are engaging 6 with those most at risk." 7 Do you agree that independent advocates should be 8 used nationally as a means of better engaging with 9 children who may be being reluctant to engage with 10 police and local authority officials? 11 A. I think the nature of their skills, the independent 12 nature of their skills, makes them absolutely key in 13 their ability to engage children as a non-authority 14 figure. You can see by the frequency of their use 15 within our force, within a really, really demanding 16 landscape, where disclosure and discovery is really, 17 really difficult, they are absolutely invaluable. 18 Q. I'd just like to take you to a few of the children's 19 cases now if I may, Mr Richards, to try and see if I can 20 ask you some questions about elements of disruption, 21 first of all, and then some other elements in relation 22 to those cases. There is a case of CS-A24 who we heard 23 a little bit about this morning. CS-A24 -- we read out 24 the summaries this morning, but just by way of 25 background, I think this child was disclosed from the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

1 documentation "five or six sexual partners since the age
 2 of 11", was reported to have a disability, and referred
 3 to -- there is reference to different males that the
 4 child had described contact with. It might help you to
 5 bring up the police witness statement that deals with
 6 this child, please, so it's SWP000150_012. This is the
 7 witness statement, I think, that one of your colleagues
 8 gave that goes through some of the individual cases. If
 9 we can go, please, to paragraphs 3.0 -- beginning at
 10 3.0. There is a narrative of this child's -- the
 11 various events in relation to this child between 3.0 and
 12 3.16. I think you were aware, I think, we were going to
 13 ask you some questions about this child's case, so have
 14 you had a chance to refresh your memory on the
 15 background to this child?
 16 **A. I have, thank you.**
 17 Q. There is mention in the police witness statement here to
 18 the fact that what's said is there was no direct
 19 disclosure by the child, and I think what's being said
 20 is, no direct disclosure of a criminal sexual offence.
 21 But there is reference on the SERAF assessment to the
 22 child describing sexual partners and giving oral sex to
 23 males of her own age. Can you help us with how those
 24 two seem to be at odds with each other?
 25 **A. So the emphasis of our response to this was with regard**

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1 case. Do you understand?
 2 **A. Yes. What I will say is, we did conduct intelligence**
 3 **research to try to make that reference to Romanian males**
 4 **more precise. It didn't cross-reference with any**
 5 **intelligence we held. At a later date, the subject**
 6 **actually disclosed that that allegation regarding**
 7 **Romanian males was not true.**
 8 Q. If you look, please, at paragraph 3.5 to paragraph 3.6
 9 of the statement about this child -- if we can scroll in
 10 on 3.5 to 3.6. Dealing here with the missing occasions
 11 in relation to this child, there were a total of five
 12 missing episodes in 2018 which were not subject to
 13 debrief by an advocate despite referral:
 14 "I am aware that at that time the DS was also
 15 covering the missing person coordinator role and he
 16 referred the child in for debriefs. There were no
 17 further missing incidents."
 18 It looks as if that child did not have the full
 19 number of Return Home Interviews that were to be
 20 expected. Is that a fair reading of that?
 21 **A. I have been made party to an explanation by the**
 22 **Barnardo's advocate with regard to why that happened,**
 23 **and that explanation makes reference to repeated**
 24 **attempts to engage other partner agencies to facilitate**
 25 **contact to the subject, without success.**

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1 **to the possible existence of an organised crime group**
 2 **involving Romanian males. We did participate in the**
 3 **multi-agency conversations and the multi-agency CSE**
 4 **strategy meetings, and we did research the disclosure**
 5 **made around Romanian males in a bid to identify the**
 6 **existence of that network, organised network,**
 7 **unsuccessfully.**
 8 **There were other police involvements subsequently,**
 9 **but with regard to the reference you have made to the**
 10 **sexual activity, I am not familiar with that, I'm sorry.**
 11 Q. Are you able to assist the inquiry with what police
 12 activity or disruption took place in relation to those
 13 allegations, not so much of the organised -- existence
 14 of an organised group, but more about those allegations
 15 that the child was making of having what were described
 16 as sexual partners and giving oral sex to males of her
 17 own age. Can you indicate what disruption activity took
 18 place around those?
 19 **A. I can't, I'm afraid, I'm sorry. I'm not aware of that**
 20 **precise description.**
 21 Q. The strategy meeting for the child seems to record:
 22 "We need to know more about these Romanian males."
 23 But the follow-up to that isn't apparent to the
 24 inquiry from the children's file. So it isn't clear
 25 what disruption activity actually took place in that

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1 **Notwithstanding that, the child involved would have**
 2 **been subject to continued Return Home Interviews, some**
 3 **of which may have been carried out by the CSID CSE team.**
 4 Q. CS-A25 is another child who had, according to the
 5 evidence that we have analysed, several missing episodes
 6 over a period of 17 months prior to the first meeting
 7 where issues of CSE were discovered or discussed. Can
 8 you perhaps remind yourself of this evidence, beginning
 9 at 2.1 of page 150 -- sorry, it is internal page _002.
 10 So CS-A25 was another case that we looked at earlier.
 11 This was a child who was one of several siblings, had
 12 a long history of described domestic violence and in
 13 relation to this child's case, there were, I think, at
 14 least seven missing-from-home reports over a period
 15 between May and August 2018 and a significant number of
 16 missing episodes that went on thereafter. Can you
 17 comment on what role the police played in these?
 18 **A. In terms of the Return Home Interviews or the --**
 19 Q. I think the point that was put on the topics list for
 20 you to reflect on is the extent to which there was
 21 a significant number of missing episodes prior to the
 22 first CSE meeting. So I think the issue here was the
 23 extent to which the risk of CSE in that period of time,
 24 that 17-month period, was considered, whether you could
 25 help with that?

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<p>1 A. So I have conducted some inquiries with regard to trying 2 to explain that, and it seems that, at that time, there 3 was a tactical decision made by the police in Swansea 4 that the CSE advocate would not be deployed, and the 5 reason for that was a decision or a concern that there 6 may have been, within the context of an ongoing police 7 investigation, a potential conflict between police 8 evidence gathering and CSE interviews with the child in 9 question. So that is a potential explanation. 10 Unfortunately, the detective involved in that 11 investigation at the time is currently on leave, so 12 I haven't been able to speak to her, but that is the 13 view that's been given to me from the CSE coordinator. 14 I am reassured by the fact that, during that period, 15 I have found evidence of 11 detailed Return Home 16 Interviews conducted by police officers which all 17 contained evidence of detailed debrief and also evidence 18 of those detailed debriefs being used to furnish ongoing 19 subsequent multi-agency conversations and activities. 20 Q. In relation to CS-A25, can you assist with what action 21 was taken by the police to investigate who was supplying 22 the child with drugs and alcohol which was raised at 23 several of the child protection meetings? 24 A. Yes. There would have been extensive intelligence 25 research with regard to all those activities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 Unfortunately, there was never an opportunity to take 2 proactive action against drug dealers. Having reviewed 3 the case myself, I am aware that there was a potential 4 opportunity to investigate an allegation of drink 5 spiking, and that was raised within a multi-agency CSE 6 meeting. Unfortunately, the minutes don't disclose or 7 document why that wasn't captured, why that 8 investigation or the need for that investigation wasn't 9 captured by partner agencies or by -- captured within 10 the documentation. So, unfortunately, I am sorry to 11 conclude that was probably a missed opportunity. 12 Q. Our understanding of the facts around this child are 13 that there was a meeting on 4 September 2018 where 14 I think a relative of the child was expressing concerns 15 about several particular individuals. Can you indicate 16 what investigation or disruption took place about those 17 people that were described in the 4 September meeting? 18 A. Were those individuals individuals within the family? 19 I'm sorry. 20 Q. Sorry, I'm just looking to see how they have been 21 redacted. Forgive me. I think they have been given 22 ciphers, so it's not actually possible to distinguish. 23 I may have got that wrong. But it looks as if what was 24 happening here was that the grandmother of the child is 25 raising concerns and I think there are three different</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>
<p>1 individuals. I think then separately, and I am trying 2 to make sure I respect the redactions here, there was 3 concern at an address, a particular address, being the 4 source of particular risk of exploitation. So the 5 question is, what disruption activity took place across 6 those names of people and of that address? 7 A. I think you may be -- are you referring to a core group 8 meeting? 9 Q. Yes. 10 A. I'm not sure the police were actually present within 11 that meeting, but the spirit of what -- 12 Q. I think that's right. I can bring it up to help you: 13 SCC000539. It is a meeting I think at the school, or at 14 a school. There are social workers and others present. 15 I don't see the police there, but it is quite a detailed 16 meeting. 17 A. Thank you for reminding me of that. The grandmother was 18 very firm in making her views clear regarding potential 19 abusers. With regard to the main aspect of her point, 20 it was in relation to a young boy -- first of all, it 21 was in relation to a young boy who was slightly younger 22 than the subject, A25, who was apparently potentially 23 involved in what appeared to be willing participation in 24 sexual activity between children. 25 That was dealt with in a separate meeting between</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>	<p>1 child services and the police, where it was resolved 2 that, due to the age of the subject and the boy 3 involved, it would be subject of a strategy that didn't 4 involve criminalising either child, even though it was 5 actually recorded as a crime. 6 Both nominals -- sorry, both subjects -- both 7 children were the subject of joint visits by the police 8 and Social Services for the purpose of educational input 9 which touched upon -- would have touched upon aspects 10 such as sexual health and the law. 11 There was another aspect of the grandmother's 12 complaint that involved another relative, and there was 13 an ongoing anecdotal family point of view that there was 14 a relative involved who was a drug supplier and posed 15 a threat to A25. 16 I think the demanding nature of the A25 scenario 17 caused, at times, the address of that potential 18 perpetrator, as described by the grandmother, to 19 occasionally be used as a place of safety following an 20 assessment by Social Services, and that assessment would 21 probably have involved a police input. If so, the 22 police involved at the time would have been party to the 23 intelligence I have also seen. And there was some 24 historic and current intelligence of concern regarding 25 that family member being a cannabis user.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 Notwithstanding that, at that time, I assume</p> <p>2 probably the urgency of the situation caused that</p> <p>3 address to be used as a place of safety by the emergency</p> <p>4 duty team.</p> <p>5 I think it's been asked whether or not that would</p> <p>6 have been a suitable location for a child abduction</p> <p>7 warning notice, but I must say that, within the context</p> <p>8 of what we know now regarding what I have described,</p> <p>9 I think that would have probably been inappropriate.</p> <p>10 Q. Inappropriate or an appropriate?</p> <p>11 A. Inappropriate within those difficult circumstances.</p> <p>12 Q. We can see if we look, please, at SWP000085_001 that</p> <p>13 this child is specifically named as being at risk of CSE</p> <p>14 in the vulnerability report for Gower Townhill</p> <p>15 in October of last year. So just have a look, please.</p> <p>16 This is a document you will be familiar with, but this</p> <p>17 is a vulnerability report about a particular locality,</p> <p>18 including certain particular risk issues within that</p> <p>19 locality. If we go within the pages, please, to</p> <p>20 internal page_006, the top of that page, CS-A25 is</p> <p>21 listed alongside two others as of particular risk of</p> <p>22 CSE, so "CSE victims child/child at risk/CAWN".</p> <p>23 Firstly, what is the significance of her being named in</p> <p>24 this report and, secondly, what were the police doing to</p> <p>25 protect her from exploitation at that time, having</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 identified her in that small cohort?</p> <p>2 A. There was an awful lot of police activity involving A25</p> <p>3 during that period, and much of it involved factors</p> <p>4 regarding a range of relatives, including her parents,</p> <p>5 and different incidents at that home address -- well, at</p> <p>6 her home address, but also interactions with family</p> <p>7 members at other addresses. So there were quite</p> <p>8 a considerable number of police interactions with regard</p> <p>9 to her.</p> <p>10 In terms of what steps we were taking to intervene</p> <p>11 following child sexual exploitation, the document we are</p> <p>12 looking at would have been one of the components or the</p> <p>13 documents behind the briefing and tasking process and</p> <p>14 it's no coincidence that since I've been involved in the</p> <p>15 preparation for this process, how many Swansea</p> <p>16 operational staff who used to work in this area were</p> <p>17 really, really familiar with A25.</p> <p>18 Part of our action or our intervention included an</p> <p>19 investigation into a serious sexual assault against her,</p> <p>20 it involved the arrest of two boys. We also dealt</p> <p>21 with -- as a result of that, we were involved in</p> <p>22 obtaining for her an examination via the child and</p> <p>23 adolescent mental health team. But, unfortunately, as</p> <p>24 with many of the investigations that we progressed with</p> <p>25 regard to many of these case studies, the criminal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>
<p>1 justice system does have requirements in terms of</p> <p>2 evidence gathering and sometimes the support we provide</p> <p>3 victims isn't sufficient to continue to engage them in</p> <p>4 that process.</p> <p>5 With regard to that serious sexual allegation, there</p> <p>6 were evidential difficulties that were attributable to</p> <p>7 her nonparticipation or her non-cooperation with us.</p> <p>8 Q. Two more short examples I'd like to explore with you, if</p> <p>9 I may, Mr Richards. CS-A220. You were asked to look at</p> <p>10 that case as well. Can I bring up, please,</p> <p>11 SWP000151_017, paragraph 1.50.</p> <p>12 I think, again, you were asked to review the</p> <p>13 background to this case. Do you want to just refresh</p> <p>14 your memory with what's at 1.50 and make sure that</p> <p>15 that's the correct reference?</p> <p>16 A. So --</p> <p>17 Q. Just to pause there, do you remember having looked back</p> <p>18 over this case?</p> <p>19 A. I'm very familiar with this case.</p> <p>20 Q. This was the one where there was a registered sex</p> <p>21 offender, I think, who was successfully disrupted, if</p> <p>22 I can put it that way. Is that right?</p> <p>23 A. Yes. There was -- following on from September 2017,</p> <p>24 there were a series of incidents that involved</p> <p>25 South Wales Police conducting investigations into</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>	<p>1 serious sexual offences, and that included</p> <p>2 (overspeaking) the use of the specialist Rape and</p> <p>3 Serious Sexual Offence Unit at Swansea Police Station,</p> <p>4 but also the criminal investigation department in</p> <p>5 Rhondda Cynon Taf, and there were a large number of</p> <p>6 enquiries -- well, six such enquiries but also</p> <p>7 investigations with regard to A220 sharing indecent</p> <p>8 images of herself.</p> <p>9 As part of those investigations, we recovered and</p> <p>10 analysed a large amount of digital material and there</p> <p>11 was a long-term investment in scrutinising that material</p> <p>12 in order to generate further lines of enquiry that could</p> <p>13 possibly lead to the identification of a suspect, and</p> <p>14 that suspect was identified in Bristol and, as a result</p> <p>15 of collaboration between ourselves and Avon and Somerset</p> <p>16 Police, that person was arrested and is currently --</p> <p>17 whilst he wasn't convicted of any offences in relation</p> <p>18 to A220, he remains in custody in regard to breaches of</p> <p>19 a civil order.</p> <p>20 Q. I think that was a Sexual Harm Prevention Order. Just</p> <p>21 by way of detail, had some of the information about that</p> <p>22 person come to police's attention from accommodation</p> <p>23 workers, supported accommodation workers; is that right?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, supported accommodation workers were alarmed by</p> <p>25 suspicious activity on her devices.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>

1 Q. I think we understand from the paperwork in relation to
 2 this case that a MARAC meeting was convened
 3 in August 2019. Can you assist with understanding
 4 whether this led to any further arrests or disruption
 5 activity by the police?
 6 **A. I'm not sure about the content of that MARAC meeting,**
 7 **I'm sorry. But what I will say is that I've spoken to**
 8 **the DC and the DI who are currently involved with the**
 9 **CSE team in Swansea, and what reassured me was the fact**
 10 **that that DC is still engaged with A220, and the senior**
 11 **investigating officer I've just referred to, the DI, he**
 12 **continues to review some agreed lines of enquiry to**
 13 **maximise opportunities to bring offenders to justice.**
 14 Q. Bear with me a second, please. I think there is one
 15 more child I was hoping to ask you some questions about.
 16 Yes, CS-A56, please. Can I bring up SWP000151_017.
 17 This was a child described at paragraph 1.49. The
 18 child's mother was a heroin addict who was reported to
 19 owe drug dealers in Liverpool £2,000. The 17-year-old
 20 subject admitted to having sexual intercourse with the
 21 male in question but denied being exploited. There was
 22 a partner agencies meeting. The subject was referred to
 23 the CSE team and then there was use of a Clare's Law
 24 application. Just briefly explain, really, what
 25 happened here by way of disruption action?

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1 **approach, whereby we worked with housing to restrict**
 2 **access to the premises A56 was using, but we also put in**
 3 **place patrol strategies, regular patrol strategies, that**
 4 **guided our response teams and our EBIT policing teams**
 5 **into localities where we believed she was either**
 6 **residing or might be.**
 7 Q. My final point, please, Mr Richards. Can I bring up
 8 some of the intelligence that was held by the police
 9 around this child. This is from one of
 10 the vulnerability reports: SWP000069_012. That just
 11 provides some insight for the chair and panel into the
 12 experience of this young person. She was described as
 13 a care leaver who had been exploited by organised
 14 criminal gangs for at least the last nine months. She
 15 was introduced to these gangs by her mother who
 16 allegedly sold her for sex to pay off her own drug debt.
 17 Her mother had since received a custodial sentence. She
 18 was on the CSE Protocol until she was 18. She was then
 19 given, I think, support after her 18th birthday, perhaps
 20 unusually, and the last bullet point records there was
 21 extensive intelligence being held on her involvement
 22 with gangs and previous physical/sexual assaults. To
 23 what extent did that intelligence that was held about
 24 her inform the disruption activity in that case?
 25 **A. What I have described to you is a combination of both**

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1 **A. This was a collaboration between the regional organised**
 2 **crime unit and the police in Swansea. The context to**
 3 **A56 was involvement in a county line or potentially two**
 4 **county lines. We succeeded in identifying one of those.**
 5 **The perpetrator in question was subject to complex**
 6 **covert police techniques which subsequently caused him**
 7 **to be successfully prosecuted for organised**
 8 **crime-related offences to do with the supply of drugs.**
 9 **As part of our disruption activity to support A56,**
 10 **we encouraged her to admit a Clare's Law application.**
 11 **A Clare's Law application is an application that seeks**
 12 **to disclose antecedents of a potential domestic abuse**
 13 **perpetrator that relates to his or her previous violent**
 14 **behaviour. She would not co-operate with that, so**
 15 **South Wales Police took the decision that it was in her**
 16 **interests for us to disclose that proactively, and that**
 17 **was seen as a successful tactic in preventing her from**
 18 **travelling to Liverpool to be with the perpetrator.**
 19 **A second series of disruptive tactics involved us**
 20 **using child abuse warning notices. So we used one of**
 21 **those against the perpetrator who I have just touched**
 22 **upon, but we also used one against her mother, who we**
 23 **judged to be a key influential figure in exposing her**
 24 **daughter to the threat of this county line.**
 25 **In addition to that, we adopted a community policing**

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1 **traditional policing community tactics but also high-end**
 2 **covert policing activity using our most specialist**
 3 **policing resources. I know from conversations with the**
 4 **police practitioners involved in this case that they**
 5 **were very conscious at the time they were dealing with**
 6 **a young girl who was on the verge of adulthood, and**
 7 **I got the sense there was almost a collapsing timeframe**
 8 **in terms of how that would affect the child protection**
 9 **resources that were being brought into play. But it was**
 10 **quite clear to me that all opportunities were being**
 11 **taken to seek police interventions and investigations to**
 12 **bring people to justice, but, again, I think the -- one**
 13 **of the challenges here was that the perception of A56**
 14 **made it very difficult with regard to us recruiting her**
 15 **support to close the evidential gap and possibly bring**
 16 **a prosecution, unfortunately.**
 17 MS HILL: Thank you very much. Chair, those are all my
 18 questions for Mr Richards. Thank you.
 19 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. I have one or two
 20 questions, and then I will pass over to my colleagues.
 21 Questions from THE PANEL
 22 THE CHAIR: We haven't heard so much, so far, in this
 23 hearing about the extreme physical violence and
 24 humiliation that so often accompanies the sexual
 25 exploitation of children. I wonder, Chief

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<p>1 Superintendent, whether you have any comment to make 2 about this from your experience in Swansea? Is that 3 a familiar pattern to you? 4 A. I think, within the context of a relationship, a CSE -- 5 I'm reluctant to use the word "relationship" and 6 cross-reference it to CSE. But I think any CSE, with 7 its exploitative tactics, is likely to involve both 8 sexual violence, sexual abuse and physical abuse. One 9 of the case studies that we have touched upon involved 10 a vulnerable girl arousing the concerns of her family 11 because she had unexplained injuries, and the conclusion 12 was they were very possibly linked to domestic abuse, 13 but, unfortunately, we were never able to progress that 14 in terms of a criminal justice outcome because obtaining 15 that disclosure was very, very difficult -- well, in 16 that case, it was impossible. So I think, 17 unfortunately, the two are likely to frequently go hand 18 in hand. 19 THE CHAIR: The second question is, can you give us some 20 examples of what South Wales Police do operationally, 21 not strategically, in the Swansea area towards the 22 prevention of CSE? 23 A. So I think we have talked about the changing nature, the 24 changing culture, that's assisted our response with 25 regard to awareness of vulnerability. It is something</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 that involves primarily operational staff. I think 2 Swansea is -- faces challenges with regard to CSE, we 3 have talked about, but it also faces a demanding county 4 lines problem, and we place great investment in our 5 working with partners such as the regional organised 6 crime unit but also the South Wales Police specialist 7 crime department to bring a full range of specialists, 8 and often covert, sensitive tactics, into play to make 9 sure we harness all intelligence, including our covert 10 human intelligence sources, including the harvesting of 11 intelligence that we have already touched upon from 12 partners, internally from South Wales Police, to ensure 13 our tasking processes capture the activities of people 14 such as A56 and inform our front-line practitioners what 15 to look out for, where to patrol. 16 They are equipped now with a wide range of mobile 17 devices that facilitate short tasking times inside 18 police stations but extensive opportunities for 19 communicating away from police stations on the beat 20 within communities, and some of that mobile device media 21 allows us to use the reconfigured Return Home Interview 22 and public protection notification out on patrol. 23 I think the thing that really impressed me when I've 24 been researching some of this material is the 25 effectiveness of CSE teams in partnership with missing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>
<p>1 person teams working alongside Barnardo's advocates, and 2 what I've picked up on is, they're not just dealing with 3 the here and now, they're dealing with new occurrences, 4 yes, but they're facing a tasking process that involves 5 the revisit and staying with some of those victims that 6 we have touched upon almost as a lengthy, patient 7 approach that respects some of the challenges involved. 8 That's why, when we did that problem profile with regard 9 to the 56 perpetrators, we have revisited that a year 10 later to see what those perpetrators are doing now and 11 we will continue to revisit those identities with a view 12 to seizing upon new opportunities to bring people to 13 justice. 14 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Ms Sharpling? 15 MS SHARPLING: Thank you, chair. Just a couple of questions 16 from me, if I may. We have had a lot of discussion 17 during the course of this investigation about the 18 difficulties of collecting the relevant data, and 19 particularly with identifying CSE on various systems. 20 Can you just remind me or tell me concisely when 21 a potential CSE case would be flagged or marked by your 22 specialist team? At what stage in the process? 23 A. I think the emphasis is on doing it as early as 24 possible. The responsibility for that now sits very 25 firmly within the CSE unit and, by doing so, we have --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>	<p>1 we basically place faith in our most expert 2 practitioners in this area to make the call, and that 3 assists us, then, in both identifying the individuals in 4 question by accurate use of flags, but it also involves 5 the introduction not just of flags, but other recording 6 tactics, such as markers that bring to our attention 7 their activities if they come into contact with law 8 enforcement elsewhere. So I suppose the simple answer 9 is, as soon as possible, but there is also a requirement 10 to make sure that within six months you review it to 11 make sure it's still meaningful, and if a child loses or 12 has the CSE marker withdrawn because the situation has 13 become less urgent, but you continue to monitor that 14 child for six months using a child at risk marker, so 15 even when the CSE marker gets removed we continue to 16 show some scrutiny. 17 MS SHARPLING: Am I right in thinking then that this process 18 of flagging up CSE is not an automated process, it is 19 qualitative data and requires searches through documents 20 or incident reports or whatever it is that you use? 21 A. I think the most important thing in the process is the 22 professional judgment of the detective who is making the 23 call, but it is a call that's made frequently in 24 conjunction with strategy meetings with either -- with 25 partner agencies, normally social workers or the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

1 **Barnardo's advocate.**
2 **So whilst it's the CSE officer or detective that's**
3 **doing it, it's normally a democratic process involving**
4 **the contribution of other individuals.**
5 MS SHARPLING: I see. Could I just ask for a little more
6 information about local intelligence. We know from what
7 you have said that there are many ways in which local
8 intelligence can be gathered and from whom. But
9 I wondered how your local officers and community
10 officers are told to approach conversations with the
11 community, such as cab drivers, hoteliers, pub
12 landlords, owners of take-aways, et cetera. So often
13 a source of information about what's going on in the
14 locality and how that's collated and used in problem
15 profiling, for example.
16 **A. CSE is, as I have said, a strategic priority for the**
17 **force, and that is projected or has line of sight all**
18 **the way through to the operational activities of**
19 **front-line staff.**
20 **So you've seen the problem profile, but there's**
21 **a control strategy and a delivery plan that will contain**
22 **an intelligence requirement. So the intelligence**
23 **activities of officers in Swansea will rely on tasking**
24 **that intelligence requirement, and some of those**
25 **intelligence arrangements will make reference to almost**

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1 CSE in their local area?
2 **A. Well --**
3 MS SHARPLING: I appreciate that's a difficult question.
4 **A. It is a difficult -- if I am asked to give you**
5 **a reassurance that that's not going to happen -- what**
6 **I will say is that, having witnessed the activities of**
7 **practitioners in Swansea and operational police staff,**
8 **particularly the CSE team, the missing team and the**
9 **coordinators involved in that area of business, I am**
10 **confident that we have massively improved our**
11 **performance with regard to dealing with vulnerability**
12 **and CSE during the last five years.**
13 **We will always seek to continually improve, and**
14 **there will always be room for improvement. But we are**
15 **doing our best to deal with this challenge.**
16 **We are aware it is really, really difficult, and**
17 **I have talked about disclosure and discovery, and those**
18 **challenges around investigations that have sometimes**
19 **thwarted us from bringing people to justice, but I'm**
20 **confident that the main theme I'm picking up from with**
21 **regards to those operational activities in Swansea, by**
22 **the police and with partner Social Services, is that we**
23 **are really being vigilant, and you can see that with**
24 **A220.**
25 **I saw evidence there of a DC who has a long-term**

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1 **intelligence chapters within our systems, and those**
2 **intelligence chapters or business areas will include**
3 **detailed reference to intelligence on business premises,**
4 **such as take-aways, or ASB locations or taxi firms, and**
5 **our staff will be tasked with gathering intelligence**
6 **with regard to those.**
7 **You can tell from the activities of operational**
8 **staff in Swansea that they are really switched on to the**
9 **relevance, profile and impact of some of**
10 **the institutions you talked about with regard to CSE,**
11 **and you can see that with regard to the conversation**
12 **that we had earlier about the Romanian males.**
13 **That was scrutinised within the context of a lot of**
14 **those intelligence chapters and, when I checked, a lot**
15 **of those intelligence chapters regarding those different**
16 **institutions have become apparent to me.**
17 MS SHARPLING: The last question: we know from the past, at
18 least, that CSE has often been identified by, for
19 example, independent report writers, whistleblowers,
20 and, on occasions, media expose. I am going to ask you
21 whether you are satisfied, in the context with your
22 portfolio, whether child sexual exploitation in Swansea
23 is not going to be subject to an emerging case whereby
24 a national scandal is brought about by the failure of
25 any police force or any police officers in identifying

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1 **professional relationship with that investigation, and**
2 **we are doing everything we can to bring those**
3 **perpetrators to justice.**
4 MS SHARPLING: Thank you. That's helpful.
5 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr Frank, do you have any questions?
6 MR FRANK: No, thank you.
7 THE CHAIR: And Sir Malcolm?
8 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Just one, if I may, and it is
9 really building on your answer to the point that my
10 colleague just made with you. To take that just
11 a little bit further, is there anything that you would
12 like to be able to do to be able to better address child
13 sexual exploitation that you don't feel you can
14 currently do or that you don't feel that you can
15 currently do well enough?
16 **A. Demand and resources are always an issue. I think we**
17 **have touched on the valuable nature of the advocacy role**
18 **and how we task that carefully. We have also touched on**
19 **an acknowledgement that our intelligence processes**
20 **around profiling and demand could be improved.**
21 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Thanks very much.
22 MS HILL: Chair, forgive me, I'm terribly sorry to
23 interrupt. I'm afraid there's a very short rule 10
24 question. I wonder if I might have permission to ask
25 it? I should have seen it earlier.

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<p>1 Further examination by MS HILL</p> <p>2 MS HILL: Mr Richards, on more than one occasion in your</p> <p>3 witness evidence, I think you referred to "risky</p> <p>4 behaviour meetings" and "risky behaviour". Would you</p> <p>5 now accept that that sort of language is not appropriate</p> <p>6 in this context?</p> <p>7 A. So when I visited the Swansea CSE team last week,</p> <p>8 I walked into the office and one of the DCs was reading</p> <p>9 a 40-page document on appropriate language in relation</p> <p>10 to adolescents that had been supplied to them by</p> <p>11 Barnardo's, and I think my knowledge and my awareness</p> <p>12 regarding terminology such as "risky behaviour" has been</p> <p>13 well educated by my participation in this process.</p> <p>14 "Risky behaviour" is a well-used public protection</p> <p>15 term not just in the UK but across the world. It</p> <p>16 doesn't sit easily with me. The danger obviously is by</p> <p>17 using language like that we diminish the victim status</p> <p>18 of the individuals we have talked about. I am confident</p> <p>19 that when I have talked about some of the progress we</p> <p>20 have made in terms of culture and attitude that will</p> <p>21 resolve some of these dilemmas -- not dilemmas, some of</p> <p>22 these challenges around language, because inappropriate</p> <p>23 language is normally borne out of inappropriate</p> <p>24 attitude. What I'm sensing is, the attitude towards CSE</p> <p>25 victims by our staff is aligned to need and support.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 MS HILL: Thank you. Thank you, chair.</p> <p>2 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Richards.</p> <p>3 (The witness withdrew)</p> <p>4 MS HILL: Chair, as with yesterday, I have two short</p> <p>5 documents I wish to have your permission to adduce to</p> <p>6 complete the evidence in relation to Swansea. The</p> <p>7 statement from the Western Bay Safeguarding Children</p> <p>8 Board from Mr Jarrett, and a statement from Shehla Khan</p> <p>9 from the Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team, EYST,</p> <p>10 about which you have heard already. If I could have</p> <p>11 permission to adduce those statements, that completes</p> <p>12 the evidence around Swansea.</p> <p>13 THE CHAIR: Thank you. We conclude today's hearings and</p> <p>14 reconvene tomorrow.</p> <p>15 MS HILL: Thank you.</p> <p>16 (4.30 pm)</p> <p>17 (The hearing was adjourned to</p> <p>18 Friday, 25 September 2020 at 10.30 am)</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21 I N D E X</p> <p>22</p> <p>23 Application by MS GALLAGHER1</p> <p>24 Submissions by MR JACOBS16</p> <p>25 Submissions by MS HILL20</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 174</p>
<p>1 CS-A24 (read)</p> <p>2 Summary of timeline of WITNESS31</p> <p>3 CS-A25 (read)</p> <p>4 Summary of timeline of WITNESS35</p> <p>5 CS-A220 (read)</p> <p>6 Summary of timeline of WITNESS37</p> <p>7 CS-A56 (read)</p> <p>8 Summary of timeline of WITNESS38</p> <p>9 CS-A221 (read)</p> <p>10 MS JULIE THOMAS (affirmed)40</p> <p>11 Examination by MS HILL40</p> <p>12 Questions from THE PANEL100</p> <p>13 MR DANIEL RICHARDS (affirmed)103</p> <p>14 Examination by MS HILL104</p> <p>15 Questions from THE PANEL164</p> <p>16 Further examination by MS HILL173</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 175</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p>

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