

1 Friday, 25 September 2020
2 (10.30 am)
3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to Day 5 of
4 this public hearing. Ms Hill?
5 MS HILL: Good morning, chair and panel. Our first witness
6 for today is CS-A2.
7 WITNESS CS-A2 (sworn)
8 Examination by MS HILL
9 MS HILL: Thank you very much, CS-A2. Good morning. You
10 have provided the inquiry with two witness statements,
11 the URNs for which I will read out, just for the core
12 participants' reference. They are INQ005081 and
13 INQ006084.
14 You also provided a short third statement that was
15 provided very recently to the inquiry to respond to some
16 evidence provided by the police. That statement has
17 been provided to the police and to the council and is
18 being disclosed to core participants this morning, but
19 you will give some oral evidence about the contents of
20 that.
21 Are all those statements true, to the best of your
22 knowledge and belief?
23 A. Yes.
24 Q. I am going to ask you a series of questions, CS-A2, in
25 two broad categories. First of all, I would like to go

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1 A. We worked well as a family. She was a kind, generous
2 and compassionate, friendly and a very well liked
3 person. She worked well at school, and there weren't
4 any issues at school where I ever had to go in for any
5 big problems, and she was very well liked.
6 She was strong willed, and still is a strong-willed
7 person, and also easily led, which led to some
8 challenges. But, despite those challenges, she's a very
9 rewarding child and a much-loved member of our family.
10 Q. When did those challenges that you have described first
11 become apparent?
12 A. When she went into a high school. It was at high
13 school, really. At primary school, there were a few
14 challenges towards the end, you know, as she was growing
15 up and becoming more independent, but those really
16 developed in her first couple of years in high school.
17 Q. I think you say in your witness statement that it was
18 about the age of 11 and a half, so that coincided with
19 her move, you say, from a small village primary school
20 to a large high school.
21 A. That's right.
22 Q. Tell us a little bit more about what happened around
23 that time?
24 A. Well, there weren't any problems with her education.
25 Initially, you know, she was -- she was still performing

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1 through the chronology of your experiences, and then, in
2 the second half, I would like to ask you some questions
3 about the particular themes that this investigation is
4 looking at. I am going to follow, as best I can, the
5 topics list that you have been sent and that all core
6 participants have had a copy of. Is that all right?
7 A. Yes.
8 Q. You are very well aware, I know, CS-A2, of
9 the restriction orders in place generally in this case,
10 and specifically around your daughter. If there are any
11 issues, then of course you understand that the
12 proceedings will have to stop. Please do the best you
13 can, and I am sure you will, to make sure that you don't
14 divulge any particular details. We are very keen to
15 avoid any jigsaw identification, as I am sure you
16 understand. Is that all right?
17 A. Yes.
18 Q. Finally, if, at any point, you can't see or hear me or
19 you find it distressing or difficult and you want
20 a break, please let me know?
21 A. Okay.
22 Q. Can I begin by asking you some questions by way of
23 background. Can you tell us a little bit, please, about
24 CS-A1's very early years, so before she was 11. Tell us
25 a little bit about that, please?

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1 well, she was still well liked. But then, as she was
2 becoming more independent at high school and, you know,
3 she was hanging around with lots of other children who
4 lived near to the school and had a lot of freedom, which
5 she didn't because we had to drive her to school and,
6 you know, it was 4 miles away, so there was a distance
7 to go to get her there, she started absconding after
8 school and wanting to spend time with her friends when,
9 you know, we hadn't made those plans. So she hadn't
10 asked me. She would just go missing after school. And
11 this became a theme throughout, you know, her early
12 years at high school, that she would regularly go
13 missing.
14 Q. You explain in your witness statement that when she went
15 missing, parents were able to locate her by driving
16 around the school area and by talking to her friends.
17 But you explain that, on the majority of occasions, the
18 police became involved to try and locate her; is that
19 right?
20 A. It is, yes. Where we thought that she was local to the
21 school, and where we'd had sightings, where somebody
22 would say, "We've seen her", we would wait and, you
23 know, I would wait -- I would talk to parents, I would
24 talk to other children and I'd try and find her, but
25 certainly, when she was gone missing for over an hour or

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<p>1 if I'd got no feedback of where she was, I called the</p> <p>2 police, you know, for her safety, but that became more</p> <p>3 and more frequent.</p> <p>4 Q. You explain in your witness statement that, when you</p> <p>5 called the police, you would explain that you were very</p> <p>6 concerned about how vulnerable she was, but you say</p> <p>7 that, at this time, she was still very loving towards</p> <p>8 you as parents, despite these challenges; is that right?</p> <p>9 A. Yes. Yes, she was. You know, even though she knew that</p> <p>10 I'd had to call the police, you know, she didn't take it</p> <p>11 out on us. You know, sometimes she did, but she still</p> <p>12 wanted -- it was quite obvious that she still wanted to</p> <p>13 be part of this family and be part of it.</p> <p>14 Q. You say in your witness statement at paragraph 4 that</p> <p>15 when you first reached out to Social Services, it was</p> <p>16 about 2014. Is that right?</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Help us with what prompted you to contact</p> <p>19 Social Services for help?</p> <p>20 A. Some challenging behaviour that we were struggling with,</p> <p>21 and we just wanted, you know, advice on how to deal with</p> <p>22 that.</p> <p>23 Q. I think there had also been an issue, had there, when</p> <p>24 you had seen some text messages on her phone that had</p> <p>25 troubled you. Can you tell us a little bit about that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. I had noticed in her first year of high school</p> <p>2 that I was seeing sexualised text messages. Obviously,</p> <p>3 as a parent, I was monitoring her phone at the time, and</p> <p>4 she'd just been introduced to social media, and I was</p> <p>5 really concerned about some of the messages. So I went</p> <p>6 into the school and I spoke to the safeguarding, who was</p> <p>7 obviously also a senior member of staff there, and</p> <p>8 I showed him the messages, and he said -- he was</p> <p>9 obviously -- you know, took it very seriously and said</p> <p>10 that he was concerned. He knew the individuals</p> <p>11 involved; I didn't. But I knew the names from the</p> <p>12 messages. And they said that they would deal with it,</p> <p>13 and they said that they would even do an assembly on it</p> <p>14 with the people involved, and that actually included my</p> <p>15 daughter as well, and they would do a whole assembly --</p> <p>16 you know, include it in their assembly, so that it went</p> <p>17 wider than just her and her group of friends.</p> <p>18 Q. You explain that you were first visited by</p> <p>19 Social Services, I think, in January 2015 and that they</p> <p>20 provided, initially, some support, a play therapist,</p> <p>21 a nonviolent resistance and training session, I think,</p> <p>22 or course, and that you were grateful for that, but you</p> <p>23 say this:</p> <p>24 "We were committed to that and tried to the best of</p> <p>25 our abilities, but, despite everyone's efforts, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>
<p>1 situation continued to deteriorate to a point where we</p> <p>2 did not feel we could keep her safe in the family home.</p> <p>3 She was therefore accommodated by the local authority</p> <p>4 under section 20 on a voluntary basis, with our</p> <p>5 agreement, in May 2016, when she was 13 years old."</p> <p>6 Is that correct?</p> <p>7 A. Correct.</p> <p>8 Q. When you agreed to that section 20 placement, CS-A2,</p> <p>9 what were you hoping would happen?</p> <p>10 A. Well, we hoped that it would be a temporary</p> <p>11 accommodation and that we would have the expertise to</p> <p>12 help us through the challenging times that we were</p> <p>13 having, and also, most importantly, we had to keep her</p> <p>14 safe. She was absconding too many times, almost on</p> <p>15 a daily basis, after school, and we needed specialist</p> <p>16 help with that.</p> <p>17 Q. You say in your witness statement, and you will give</p> <p>18 more evidence about this, that things did not,</p> <p>19 unfortunately, work out as you'd anticipated, and you</p> <p>20 feel that Social Services were unable to keep her safe</p> <p>21 and, in fact, things became a lot worse, as your</p> <p>22 evidence is that she became a victim of child sexual</p> <p>23 exploitation while in the local authority's care. Is</p> <p>24 that your position?</p> <p>25 A. It is, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 Q. Going through your list of issues as best I can, can you</p> <p>2 tell us a little bit, first of all, about your concerns</p> <p>3 about the placements she had. So tell us a little bit</p> <p>4 about those placements she had?</p> <p>5 A. Well, some of the placements were wholly inappropriate.</p> <p>6 There were two placements where she was placed with</p> <p>7 other young people who were going missing also. One of</p> <p>8 the individuals was a regular -- what the police called</p> <p>9 a MISPER, a regular MISPER, had been, and was</p> <p>10 significantly older than our daughter, and also</p> <p>11 introduced her to an older -- a new, older network.</p> <p>12 The other problem in the placement was that, in one</p> <p>13 of them, it was in the area that we believed she was</p> <p>14 being abused.</p> <p>15 Another placement, the foster carer was a brand-new</p> <p>16 foster carer and this was her first placement. We</p> <p>17 didn't think that was appropriate.</p> <p>18 Having said that, I do recognise that there is</p> <p>19 a shortage of placements and, even on one occasion, she</p> <p>20 had to stay in an office at the local authority with the</p> <p>21 social worker, due to a shortage of placements.</p> <p>22 Q. I'm just trying to put some of them in chronological</p> <p>23 order. You indicate that the first placement she had</p> <p>24 seemed to be a positive one. I think that was from May</p> <p>25 to June 2016. That broke down in June 2016. She was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

1 placed in temporary care until a further placement was
 2 found. You understand that the social worker working on
 3 the case was working with your daughter as the first
 4 case that the social worker had been working on; is that
 5 right?
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. You say that CS-A1 was placed in an out-of-county
 8 placement, she was excluded from school during that
 9 time. She was placed with someone who was a single
 10 foster carer, whose experience -- who had no experience
 11 of being a foster carer prior to having CS-A1 placed
 12 there; is that right?
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. You describe that I think in that placement there was an
 15 event, an incident, where it was understood that she had
 16 stayed overnight with a man and his father. Do you want
 17 to talk a little bit about that, please?
 18 **A. Yes. We'd had many missing episodes at this point, but**
 19 **this was the first point that it was overnight.**
 20 **Obviously, you know, that came as a huge amount of**
 21 **concern, you know, for obvious reasons, really. Nobody**
 22 **knew where she was. It also concerned us that somebody**
 23 **who would allow a 13-year-old to stay overnight was**
 24 **obviously not somebody that I would deem as a desirable**
 25 **person to have overnight without checking first. She**

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1 **over in this person's house with no authority.**
 2 Q. What is your understanding about whether or not there
 3 was any sexual activity during that overnight stay or
 4 two overnight stays?
 5 **A. Well, I was requesting information to see whether**
 6 **anything had happened from, obviously, my written email**
 7 **to the police. I didn't get any response to that, so**
 8 **I put a complaint forward to the IOPC -- at that time,**
 9 **it was called IPCC -- so I could get some feedback,**
 10 **because, you know, my requests for information were not**
 11 **responded to. Then, following that complaint, I was**
 12 **told that he had been interviewed, but he denied**
 13 **everything and said that it was just purely**
 14 **a friendship.**
 15 **I didn't believe that, because in her Return Home**
 16 **Interview our daughter had admitted sexual activity to**
 17 **the social worker and later retracted that -- had said**
 18 **that there was full sexual activity and then later**
 19 **retracted that and said there was sexual activity. Oh,**
 20 **and also especially that this boy was a couple of years**
 21 **older.**
 22 Q. Just help us with what the age gap was between them at
 23 that time. Remind us how old CS-A1 was at this point?
 24 **A. 13.**
 25 Q. How old did you understand the male was?

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1 **had given a reason why she was staying and said that,**
 2 **you know, her parents were somewhere else, but obviously**
 3 **that wasn't true.**
 4 **Then, afterwards, we found out that -- by the**
 5 **police -- she stayed on two occasions, I believe. Then**
 6 **we found out the name of the person that she'd stayed**
 7 **at -- you know, stayed overnight with, and that gave us**
 8 **huge concern, because one of those people was the -- as**
 9 **you referenced earlier, who had asked her for nude**
 10 **photos in the sexual communication that I was talking**
 11 **about earlier whilst at school. I didn't know this**
 12 **individual. I didn't know this individual's family at**
 13 **all. But I recognised the name and I spoke to**
 14 **Julia Brealey from Warwickshire Police and gave them my**
 15 **concerns and also put in writing what had happened**
 16 **earlier.**
 17 Q. This is DI -- an inspector that you spoke to,
 18 Inspector Brealey. What were your particular concerns
 19 that you expressed to the police?
 20 **A. That this person had shown a clear interest in our**
 21 **daughter earlier on, I believe a couple of years**
 22 **earlier, and the name was familiar to me. There had**
 23 **been sexual communication, in terms of requesting a nude**
 24 **photo, although the nude photo was not given at the**
 25 **time, when she was living at home, and that she'd stayed**

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1 **A. 15.**
 2 Q. Your understanding, I think, was that he was living with
 3 his father at the time; is that right?
 4 **A. That's right, yes.**
 5 Q. You describe that, in November 2016, CS-A1 was moved to
 6 a different placement. You say that that was her fourth
 7 placement, including the temporary placement. The
 8 concern I think you raise about that one was around your
 9 perception that there wasn't enough specialist care and
 10 support available to her in that placement. Do you want
 11 to tell us a little bit more about your concerns about
 12 that?
 13 **A. Yes. There was other children also fostered and also**
 14 **their own children, and it was quite a large number, so**
 15 **I was concerned not about foster carers per se but about**
 16 **her -- you know, somebody keeping her safe with so many**
 17 **people in the household.**
 18 Q. Were there occasions during this placement when you
 19 became concerned that she was staying overnight with
 20 older teenage boys when she was just 13?
 21 **A. I was, yes.**
 22 Q. I think there came a point during this placement, in
 23 around February 2017, when you saw some messages on her
 24 phone. Do you want to tell us about that, please?
 25 **A. Yes. I saw -- because we were still seeing her and**

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1 I saw on our home computer social media messages which
 2 was between herself and CS-F218, where they are sharing
 3 information that she had shared the bed, the same bed,
 4 with him. At this time, we know that she was reported
 5 missing on several occasions. I also saw some mobile
 6 phone evidence as well, because, as a parent, I was, you
 7 know, just checking through, just checking that
 8 everything was okay, because she was linked to a home
 9 iPad. So some of the messages would come through if
 10 they were -- you know, if they were Apple messages,
 11 because we were sharing the same ID. I saw messages on
 12 there as well, so I made an appointment with
 13 Roy Wheelwright at Warwickshire Police and gave him all
 14 the copies of the evidence that I'd seen.

15 Q. In relation to that evidence, what's your understanding
 16 of what police investigation took place?

17 A. You know, consideration obviously was given in the
 18 meeting by him -- you know, and he took it all on board.
 19 But I was really concerned to hear that there was not
 20 enough evidence to take action, but there would be --
 21 you know, to make an arrest, but this information would
 22 be saved on file for later, you know, if any more
 23 evidence came forward. I was also told that a third
 24 independent person had also reported the incident that
 25 I had reported to him.

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1 who -- you know, the undesirable network that she would
 2 come into contact with, that there was a part of me
 3 believing that she'd be better at home, better not going
 4 to school than being introduced to -- because of
 5 the amount of absconding she was doing and her inability
 6 to keep herself safe.

7 Q. I'm going to come now to ask you some questions about
 8 the family and professionals meeting with
 9 Social Services on 8 March 2017. But just for the
 10 record, we do have paperwork of various reviews that
 11 took place because she was a looked-after child in 2016.
 12 I think the dates that we have are 8 June and 30 August.
 13 I think there is other paperwork around that time that
 14 I'm not going to take you to. But I didn't want the
 15 impression to be given that this was the first meeting
 16 that was pertinent.
 17 But you, I think, were at the family and
 18 professionals meeting on 8 March 2017; is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. This was the occasion when -- an occasion when the risk
 21 of CSE was discussed. Your evidence at paragraph 18 of
 22 your first statement is that the social worker said she
 23 was confident that CS-A1 would now meet the CSE
 24 threshold and may be entitled to a CSE project worker.
 25 What did you say at that meeting?

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1 Q. During this placement, did there come a time when you
 2 were asked to go with CS-A1 to a consultation about
 3 contraception?

4 A. Yes. Just going back to the incident of where action
 5 wasn't taken on the sharing a bed, I was very shocked,
 6 not just from a parent perspective, that a child could
 7 share a bed with, you know, another adult male, which
 8 was significantly older, in their 20s, could share a bed
 9 and no action be taken. I felt it from a parent
 10 perspective, but also from a society perspective, that
 11 it was just morally deficient that that could ever
 12 happen.

13 Around this time, yes, you're right, my daughter did
 14 ask me if I could take her for some contraception,
 15 which, again, was extremely distressing, extremely
 16 concerning, and I had to take her because the
 17 consequences, if I didn't take her, would be worse.

18 Q. I think in your witness statement around this point
 19 there were concerns about the schools that she was
 20 attending. Do you want to tell us a little bit about
 21 that, please?

22 A. Yes, they were specialist schools, but I felt that they
 23 both -- both schools introduced her to another
 24 undesirable network, and, you know, certainly on the
 25 first school, I was so concerned about this school, of

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1 A. That she was already at risk and she'd already passed
 2 that threshold. You know, she definitely, definitely
 3 needed a CSE worker and, you know, as you mentioned, it
 4 wasn't the first time.

5 Q. You say at paragraph 18 of your first witness statement:
 6 "It's ironic that while the professionals had
 7 finally come to the conclusion that CS-A1 was at
 8 a sufficient threshold of risk of CSE, that sadly, in
 9 all likelihood, she had probably already been abused by
 10 this point."

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. I think you also explained in that meeting the issue
 13 around your contact with the police and the digital
 14 material that you'd seen; is that correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You explain at paragraph 19 of your witness statement
 17 that she continued to abscond, and in fact you say this
 18 got worse; she was going missing on a large number of
 19 occasions, spending time with older males, and she began
 20 to engage in drug-taking behaviour. Is that correct?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You explain that you did your best to maintain contact
 23 with her during this time, although sometimes it wasn't
 24 possible, but you continued to try to maintain contact
 25 with her?

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1 **A. Yes. Our number one priority was always to preserve our**
 2 **relationship, because we knew that if she could keep**
 3 **that relationship with us, she would be better in the**
 4 **long term, and also other professionals and other foster**
 5 **carers agreed that, you know, when she was seeing us and**
 6 **had that kind of contact with us, that she was in**
 7 **a better place. So there were times where I would have**
 8 **loved to have stepped in and said things and done**
 9 **things, but I knew that I couldn't because it would have**
 10 **jeopardised the very fragile relationship that we had,**
 11 **and that was paramount to me, because I knew that it was**
 12 **paramount to her.**
 13 Q. The next family and professionals meeting that you refer
 14 to in your statement was from 25 April 2017. You
 15 explain that the context in which that took place was
 16 that her foster placement had broken down again and
 17 a further placement was being arranged. I think it was
 18 this one that you were concerned about because of its
 19 geographical location; is that correct?
 20 **A. It is, yes. Because it was in the area that we knew**
 21 **that she was absconding to, and we already knew that she**
 22 **was -- we had a strong belief that she was being abused**
 23 **and we wanted her away from, you know, that network of**
 24 **people that she was going to.**
 25 Q. There was a proposed MACE meeting later in the week, and

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1 **that she was placed with an older person who had been**
 2 **a regular MISPER who introduced her to an older network**
 3 **who went on to abuse her.**
 4 Q. The placement continued, as you have said, and your
 5 evidence has been that it was in that placement that the
 6 person I think she was located with was three years
 7 older than her. Is that right? The top of page 7,
 8 paragraph 22 of your witness statement. You were
 9 concerned about the geography of this placement, but
 10 also that there was another young person, three years
 11 older than her, who had been known to regularly go
 12 missing, and that CS-A1 was introduced to that young
 13 person's network of males, who went on to sexually
 14 exploit her; is that correct?
 15 **A. Are we referring to CS-F126?**
 16 Q. Yes.
 17 **A. Yes. Yes, that person was in that network, and we saw**
 18 **messages on the iPad where she was liaising with another**
 19 **friend, who obviously knew this group and where she**
 20 **alleged to this person that she'd had nonconsensual sex.**
 21 **She didn't use those words, those are my words, and**
 22 **I read through the messages and I was absolutely**
 23 **horrified, and we took the iPad to the police.**
 24 Q. Tell us what happened in response to you doing that,
 25 please?

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1 your understanding, I think, was that that wasn't going
 2 ahead. You asked if it could be made into a CSE meeting
 3 instead; is that correct?
 4 **A. It is, yes.**
 5 Q. What did the social worker indicate to you?
 6 **A. That there wasn't a CSE person available, and that's why**
 7 **the MACE meeting hadn't gone ahead. But I believed at**
 8 **that point that CSE -- there needed to be an**
 9 **intervention, absolutely paramount, as soon as possible,**
 10 **not even to wait for the MACE meeting.**
 11 Q. Is there anything else you want to indicate about that
 12 meeting that I have not covered with you?
 13 **A. The MACE meeting?**
 14 Q. No, forgive me, the April 2017 meeting?
 15 **A. Oh, no.**
 16 Q. You conclude, I think, this part of your evidence by
 17 saying you left the meeting feeling very concerned about
 18 her placement, that it would be in the very geographical
 19 area where she was most at risk of CSE. You noted there
 20 that -- at the end of that statement, you say this:
 21 "The level of harm could undoubtedly have been
 22 reduced if a different placement location decision had
 23 been made outside of the area in question."
 24 Is that what you believe?
 25 **A. It is, yes, because of the placement per se and the fact**

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1 **A. The police were obviously, you know, very empathetic**
 2 **with us, they took it seriously. They took the iPad**
 3 **from us and, you know -- I was left with some comfort at**
 4 **that point that something would be done. They**
 5 **absolutely understood the state that we were in when we**
 6 **took that iPad there and we'd seen that message.**
 7 Q. I think there came a point in May 2017 when CS-A1's
 8 social worker communicated to you that she'd had
 9 a further missing episode, had been drinking alcohol and
 10 smoking cannabis, and that another young person who she
 11 was living with had given the name of a vulnerable
 12 18-year-old male who she might have been with, and that
 13 the information had been passed to the police. You were
 14 also told that CS-A1 had been visited by a CSE worker
 15 and appeared willing to engage; is that right?
 16 **A. It is, yes.**
 17 Q. You have referred in your witness statement to
 18 a consultation from 17 May 2017 noting that CS-A1 is at
 19 risk of CSE, that CAMHS cannot support her due to her
 20 life being chaotic and engaging in drug use. It was
 21 noted that she should have a key worker in school, that
 22 she was very susceptible to CSE and radicalisation. Do
 23 you want to say anything about that, what I have read
 24 out?
 25 **A. Yes. It was the CAMHS. We'd waited so long for that.**

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1 **It almost, you know, appeared my Holy Grail, that was**
 2 **the thing that was going to help her, that she would**
 3 **have that support that she absolutely so desperately**
 4 **needed, and then to be found that, because she -- her**
 5 **life was chaotic and she was engaging in drug use, that**
 6 **the support couldn't be given. I just couldn't believe**
 7 **it.**
 8 Q. The MACE meeting took place, I think, on 19 May 2017.
 9 You explain that, at that meeting, the issue of CS-A1
 10 mixing with adult males and using drugs and alcohol was
 11 discussed, and you disclosed, I think, in that meeting
 12 the message that you had seen suggesting that she'd had
 13 nonconsensual sex. I think another professional at that
 14 meeting reported that it was understood that CS-A1 had
 15 also been sending inappropriate photographs to other
 16 pupils; is that right?
 17 **A. It is. I hadn't been aware of that, but, yes, I was**
 18 **told that in the meeting.**
 19 Q. You say this in your witness statement at paragraph 26:
 20 "I was very concerned to hear Nigel Jones of
 21 Warwickshire Police state that no intervention meetings
 22 regarding CS-A1's missing episodes had been held. He
 23 also stated that he thought CS-A1 was at risk of
 24 becoming an offender. He also said he was getting very
 25 concerned that CS-A1 didn't seem to recognise the risks

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1 **In terms of the -- what the police said there, it's**
 2 **really what the police didn't say in that meeting.**
 3 **Because, towards the end of the meeting, I said that --**
 4 **I was the person who raised the rape allegation, and we**
 5 **were coming towards the end of the meeting, and**
 6 **I couldn't believe that the -- three representatives**
 7 **from the police in that meeting, and yet I was raising**
 8 **it and said, "This has got to be discussed". To be**
 9 **fair, the chair of that meeting showed her visible**
 10 **annoyance that I was the person raising that and no**
 11 **other professional, and she declared that in the**
 12 **meeting, that, you know, why has no other professional**
 13 **raised this yet? But it just seemed clear that things**
 14 **weren't being discussed openly as they should be, and**
 15 **that was the point of the MACE meeting, to keep her**
 16 **safe. I was very surprised that that hadn't been**
 17 **raised.**
 18 **Also, at the stage that we had reached, this MACE**
 19 **meeting for her to be classed as a high risk, I gave**
 20 **indicators which I had spotted, and other people should**
 21 **have spotted before, which, you know, obviously deemed**
 22 **her at high risk, which was missing from home,**
 23 **approximately 60 episodes, staying at young males'**
 24 **homes, socialising with a peer group much older than**
 25 **herself, drug and alcohol misuse, absent from school,**

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1 of her behaviour and I think a series of missing
 2 episodes were discussed."
 3 Another officer, a DC, I think, reported that CS-A1
 4 had disclosed to the police that she was sexually active
 5 with an older man.
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. What was it in particular that concerned you about that
 8 input from the police to the MACE meeting?
 9 **A. The first thing is that every single person,**
 10 **professional -- and there was a huge table full at that**
 11 **MACE meeting. We had to go around and say at what level**
 12 **of risk she was, which was low, medium and high. And**
 13 **every single person at that meeting said that she was**
 14 **high, apart from the Social Services, the children's**
 15 **manager, who thought she was at medium to high. So**
 16 **I couldn't believe, first of all, that we were having**
 17 **a MACE meeting at a point where police were involved and**
 18 **all of these professionals were involved where she's**
 19 **already at high. It just didn't seem logical to me.**
 20 **When I asked in that meeting why she was -- why we were**
 21 **here, at a high stage, someone at a high risk stage, on**
 22 **the very first MACE meeting I was told by the children's**
 23 **manager could I take this up with my social worker**
 24 **outside of the meeting, and that never happened. So**
 25 **that's where we are.**

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1 **self-harm and suicidal thoughts, sexualised risk taking**
 2 **and markings -- love bites being noted on her neck --**
 3 **that we were at this first meeting already with that**
 4 **already known.**
 5 Q. You continue, I think, in that part of your evidence to
 6 say:
 7 "I was told the purpose of the meeting was to see if
 8 CS-A1 now met the CSE threshold. I found this
 9 frustrating as, for many months, I had been trying to
 10 advise Social Services and the police that she was
 11 already not just at risk of CSE, but was a CSE victim
 12 and that the threshold had been met a long time ago."
 13 Is that correct?
 14 **A. Yes.**
 15 Q. You refer to the fact that the minutes of the meeting
 16 note that you queried why, with the number of issues
 17 raised previously, CS-A1 was not considered to be at
 18 high risk earlier, and it was that point, I think, that
 19 you were asked to discuss with the social worker
 20 separately; is that correct?
 21 **A. Yes.**
 22 Q. Is there anything else that you wish to say about that
 23 MACE meeting?
 24 **A. No, I think we've covered everything.**
 25 Q. I think, after the meeting, you sent a letter to the

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1 council expressing your concerns. Can you just
 2 summarise a little bit about that, a little bit of
 3 evidence about that, please?
 4 **A. Well, I put my strong views and concerns in a letter.**
 5 **I needed to put something in writing, you know, about**
 6 **the situation, you know, the fact -- the main thing is**
 7 **that she had been already abused at this point, and we**
 8 **were having the first meeting about it just far too**
 9 **late.**
 10 Q. I think there came a point in May 2017 when the council
 11 indicated that they were proposing to apply for a care
 12 order in relation to CS-A1.
 13 **A. Yes.**
 14 Q. Taking this relatively briefly, if I may, just to focus
 15 on this, during the course of those care proceedings,
 16 there was a CSE assessment; is that right?
 17 **A. Yes.**
 18 Q. That noted, I think, in brief, many of the factors that
 19 you have already referred to. There was reference in
 20 that, I think, was there, to somebody -- you say CS-A1's
 21 boyfriend, that he was reported to be 16 years of age.
 22 What was your understanding about that person?
 23 **A. Well, at that point, I didn't know too much about this**
 24 **person. It was later that I knew that he was 18.**
 25 Q. You indicate that she was, at this point, in contact

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1 **Deborah Young from Warwickshire Police that they**
 2 **believed they knew where she was staying when she was**
 3 **reported missing and had already been told about**
 4 **a vulnerable person that they believed that she was**
 5 **spending time with by Social Services as well, this**
 6 **person referred to as CS-F119.**
 7 **I asked Deborah Young about the undesirable address,**
 8 **and -- well, first of all, I'd hoped it would be**
 9 **desirable and I said, "Is it an okay address?", and she**
 10 **said, "Well, put it this way, I wouldn't want my" --**
 11 **I don't know whether she said daughter or family member,**
 12 **"staying there". So I already knew it was an**
 13 **undesirable address she was staying at. I asked her for**
 14 **more specifics on this address and she wasn't able to**
 15 **give it to me, but she gave a specific point,**
 16 **a location, around that area, so on the morning when we**
 17 **were having contact, I was told that she was reported**
 18 **missing and she asked me to meet her at this specific**
 19 **place, so I knew that she'd been reported missing.**
 20 **When she came to the car, she was unkempt, she**
 21 **looked uncared for, she smelt of body odour, she had so**
 22 **many love bites on her neck that she put a zipper to**
 23 **cover them, but you could just see them all around her**
 24 **neck. I don't know whether she was heaving or whether**
 25 **she was retching in the back of the car, but it was**

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1 with males who were on police bail, that she was staying
 2 overnight with people known to the local authority, and
 3 that, when she went missing, she would take the SIM card
 4 out of her phone so she could not be traced. Is that
 5 what you understood was happening?
 6 **A. Yes.**
 7 Q. You give some evidence in paragraph 31 of your first
 8 witness statement, that she had been previously used as
 9 a drugs runner; is that right?
 10 **A. Yes. I didn't know that. That was -- in one of**
 11 **the meetings that had come out. I wasn't aware of that.**
 12 Q. You go on to say that your understanding is that,
 13 whenever she had access to drugs or alcohol, she would
 14 consume both and she was not paying for these but being
 15 given these by her friends; is that correct?
 16 **A. Yes.**
 17 Q. There came a time, I think, at the end of May 2017 where
 18 CS-A1 asked you to pick her up at a particular location
 19 because you were having contact. Do you want to tell us
 20 a little bit about that incident?
 21 **A. Yes. That was -- it was just one of the most horrific**
 22 **things that I've ever witnessed, really, and it just**
 23 **happens to be my own daughter. We had picked her up.**
 24 **I was already suspicious of the place where I was**
 25 **picking her up, because I'd already been told by**

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1 **enough for me to turn around and say, "Are you okay? Do**
 2 **you need medical attention?" And she said, "No, it's**
 3 **okay, I've just been drinking so much and I've vomited**
 4 **already this morning". Throughout contact, she just**
 5 **wasn't herself, she was just so very quiet. I was just**
 6 **devastated.**
 7 **I should say, at this point, she was weeks turned**
 8 **age 14.**
 9 Q. Are you all right to carry on giving your evidence?
 10 **A. Yes.**
 11 Q. Perhaps I can just help you with what you have said
 12 about this at paragraph 32 of your witness statement,
 13 but please do say if you need a break.
 14 **A. Okay.**
 15 Q. You go on, having described what you have just given
 16 evidence to the chair and panel about, to say this:
 17 "My point here is that, despite the police and
 18 Social Services believing that she'd been staying at
 19 this address, and that she had been reported missing
 20 overnight many times over the month of May ..."
 21 We know from evidence we have looked at that the
 22 figure was, I think, eight incidents just in May, some
 23 lasting several nights:
 24 "... they did not issue a CAWN."
 25 This is your concern about the police:

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1 "I wrote a strongly worded email to the police after
 2 this incident. This address was also known to the local
 3 authority as they had assisted CS-F119 in obtaining this
 4 flat and Social Services had already visited him to warn
 5 him about young people visiting his flat."
 6 Is that all correct?
 7 **A. It is correct. We started piecing things together. We
 8 knew she was sexually active with an older male, as you
 9 referred to earlier, in the MACE meeting. We knew she
 10 was staying at an undesirable address, had been told by
 11 police and Social Services, and I witnessed this, and
 12 I just wanted a CAWN. I mean, I wanted something,
 13 I just wanted something to know that she was being
 14 protected.**
 15 **So, of course, after this, every single time I know
 16 she's reported missing, I'm just lying in bed losing
 17 sleep, because I know exactly what is happening to her.**
 18 Q. Paragraph 33 of your witness statement has reference to
 19 another very difficult incident. Do you feel able to
 20 talk about that? If you look at paragraph 33 of your
 21 first statement. It's the incident that you describe
 22 under the heading "CS-A1 being held" --
 23 **A. Yes, I do. Before that date, as we have discussed,
 24 there was, you know, a lot of evidence pointing to where
 25 she was. I'd also started seeing messages on social**

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1 those emails was on 6 June.
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 Q. This incident we are now talking about is on
 4 7 June 2017, so it is in the same timeframe. So help us
 5 with the 7 June incident, please? I'm sorry to take it
 6 slightly out of order. That's my fault.
 7 **A. That's okay. On 7 June, I was in an area where I didn't
 8 have -- well, I had to switch my phone off, and then,
 9 when I was able to look at my phone, there was just so
 10 many messages from my daughter. So I started calling --
 11 you know, trying to call her, and she, in fact -- I was
 12 about to call her and then she was already calling me
 13 and she was in a tearful state and there was clearly
 14 something wrong. I was trying to talk to her but she
 15 was talking quietly, she sounded frightened, not just
 16 for herself, but for some reason for me, saying, you
 17 know, "Something could happen to you", and it was really
 18 hard to get information from her.**
 19 **You know, she just really wasn't giving too much
 20 information. So I said to her, "Come out of --
 21 wherever -- you're not in the foster placement are you?"
 22 And she said no. I said, "Come out, go straight back
 23 there". I was quite some distance from Warwickshire,
 24 but what I said to her was, "I can call the foster
 25 carer, she will help you". She said she was too**

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1 **media, because we'd had contact with her, and obviously
 2 I knew that person's name then, so I knew exactly where
 3 she was staying. I started reporting these messages to
 4 the police, that they were having contact.**
 5 **On 6 June, I sent an email to Roy Wheelwright,
 6 Nigel Jones of Warwickshire Police, the social worker
 7 and the manager attaching social media messages between
 8 CS-A1 and CS-F119 discussing sex, and CS-F19 saying that
 9 he loves CS-A1. School is abbreviated to "scwl" and
 10 CS-A1 refers to CS-F119 as a sex addict and a specific
 11 time that they were meeting on that date.**
 12 **Another thing that I want to mention on that point
 13 is that Marcus Franklin from Warwickshire Police had
 14 come to visit us to talk about the alleged rape, and
 15 I also showed him the sexual communication of CS-F119,
 16 and he said to me, "CS-A1 and CS-F119 are having sex".**
 17 **Now, obviously, if you look at the messages, it does
 18 seem to go beyond reasonable doubt, but it did really
 19 hurt me when it was spoken out loud. He -- I'm not
 20 saying anything detrimental about him, he was stating
 21 the obvious, but it still did really hurt me. And all
 22 this is before the other incident that you want to talk
 23 about.**
 24 Q. Just to anchor that in the dates, and it is my mistake,
 25 the email I think that you have been describing, one of

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1 **frightened to leave the place that she was, and, in the
 2 end, I said, "Are you being held against your will?",
 3 and she said, "Yes". She said, "I don't want to go".
 4 In the end, even though we'd never had a conversation
 5 about CS-F119, I said, "Are you at the premises of
 6 CS-F119?". She said yes. I ended the call and
 7 I dialled 999, and the police -- I just said the name of
 8 the person who I believed she was at and they were there
 9 in minutes. They already knew the address.**
 10 Q. You said to the police that the information CS-A1 had
 11 given you would amount to false imprisonment. That's
 12 what you were reporting to the police; is that correct?
 13 **A. Yes, by what she had said to me. I don't know how true
 14 that was, obviously. I am just, you know, relating
 15 information that I'd been given.**
 16 Q. Your understanding is that the police attended, that the
 17 suspect was identified, but CS-A1 did not support police
 18 action. Is that correct?
 19 **A. Correct.**
 20 Q. A few weeks later, did you come to understand CS-A1 was
 21 still in touch with this person through social media?
 22 **A. Yes.**
 23 Q. What did you do about that and what did you understand
 24 about that?
 25 **A. On 15 June -- I was aware that he'd been issued with**

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1 a CAWN. On 15 June, I sent an email to Amy Walker to
 2 say that they are still in communication.
 3 Q. You indicate at the end of that paragraph as follows,
 4 that you reported to the police that CS-A1 was still in
 5 touch with this person and that these messages indicated
 6 she continued to think that she was in a loving
 7 relationship with this male:
 8 "CS-A1 has told me recently that she's still fearful
 9 of this person and has told me that this person has now
 10 served a prison sentence subsequent to this incident for
 11 sexual exploitation of one of her friends. She has also
 12 stated that she thought he was a bad person."
 13 Is that all correct?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. There came a time I think after this incident when an
 16 NRM, national referral mechanism, form was completed in
 17 relation to the potential child victims of modern
 18 slavery. I think there had been involvement of
 19 Barnardo's. Can you tell us a little bit about that,
 20 the significant parts of that?
 21 A. I knew that a referral had been made. But in terms of
 22 the response from the NRM, I wasn't given -- I don't
 23 recall ever receiving that information. I read about it
 24 in minutes of meetings.
 25 Q. You, I think, now understand that the NRM form filled in

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1 Q. There was mention of CS-F126, CS-F127, the boyfriend of
 2 a looked-after girl living with CS-A1, and CS-F129.
 3 Have I captured there all of the group of people of
 4 concern that were listed in the NRM document?
 5 A. I believe so.
 6 Q. There came a time in June 2017, did there not, when some
 7 CAWN notices were issued? Do you want to tell us
 8 a little bit about that, please?
 9 A. Yes. We were very, very persistent with the CAWNS
 10 because we thought this was a way out of this, where,
 11 you know, at least the perpetrators would be spoken to
 12 and they would, you know, know her age. Marcus Franklin
 13 from Warwickshire Police was very helpful with this and
 14 he actually gave me CAWNS to sign so they could be used.
 15 We felt his approach was proactive and supportive.
 16 However, even though these CAWNS were issued, we
 17 just believed they were just issued far too late. We
 18 also had conflicting information about what would happen
 19 if a CAWN was breached.
 20 One person from the police said that if
 21 a perpetrator sent her a text or breached it in any way,
 22 you know, consequences would be taken, and then somebody
 23 else said not, and also that they could only be issued,
 24 CAWNS, if our daughter was actually seen with, you know,
 25 one of the perpetrators, actually seen with them. So

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1 around this time noted that she had disclosed that she
 2 was drug running for two brothers who sell cannabis that
 3 their parents grow in the cellar, that she worked
 4 a number of nights a week until midnight delivering
 5 drugs, sometimes on foot and sometimes being given
 6 a lift. That children's services were concerned she had
 7 been raped, due to text messages seen on her phone.
 8 That, when interviewed, she had denied being raped or
 9 being sexually active.
 10 There was further references, I think, to some of
 11 the other matters that you have already described, and
 12 the conclusion of this form was to classify CS-A1 as
 13 potentially at threat of human trafficking; is that
 14 correct?
 15 A. Yes. I was told, actually -- I'm pretty sure I was told
 16 there was a positive outcome from the NRM, but in terms
 17 of that level of detail, I wasn't given that.
 18 Q. I think you now understand that within that NRM referral
 19 there were a number of names of people of concern,
 20 including some of the people about whom you have talked
 21 already, including CS-F119. Is that right?
 22 A. It is, yes.
 23 Q. There was also mention, I think, of CS-F20. CS-A1 has
 24 said that CS-F20 gives her drugs. Is that right?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 there was conflicting information there.
 2 Q. After the CAWN had been issued in relation to CS-F118,
 3 what is your understanding of the contact between CS-A1
 4 and CS-F118?
 5 A. I was concerned because I'd seen messages, and I'd sent
 6 the police messages about this individual because I was
 7 concerned that it was part of the same network. So I --
 8 in June, I have sent -- sending messages, sexualised
 9 messages, between CS-F118 and our daughter where it
 10 looked like classic grooming. He was asking her if
 11 she'd had sex with CS-F127. He was complimenting her
 12 and saying how lovely she was. Alarm bells were
 13 severely going off here for us.
 14 We know that he was issued with a CAWN eventually.
 15 Q. Did that stop the messages, as far as you understand it?
 16 A. No, I don't think, really. Following the CAWN, in July
 17 I sent an email to Clare Cox with a screen capture
 18 showing that CS-A1 had got two missed calls on her phone
 19 from CS-F118 after he'd been issued with this CAWN.
 20 I was actually in possession of her phone, as it was
 21 broken and I was trying to get it repaired.
 22 Then, after that, CS-A1 contacted her social worker
 23 to ask for the morning-after pill. And then I sent this
 24 information to Clare Cox on 17 July.
 25 On 18 July, I sent Clare Cox of Warwickshire Police

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1 information that CS-A1 was arranging to meet with
 2 CS-F118 at a time later that day, giving the location of
 3 where they were planning to meet, and then -- I was
 4 still monitoring the messages, and then after that,
 5 on -- later on, in July, from 24 July onwards, there
 6 were more sinister messages exchanged between CS-A1 and
 7 CS-F118 which were actually confirming the intercourse
 8 and CS-F118 was asking her to delete things off her
 9 phone, was putting in these messages that he was very
 10 concerned about his DNA being discovered relating to the
 11 morning-after pill, and suggesting things that she did
 12 to -- you know, to make sure that his DNA would not be
 13 found. Very, very disturbing.

14 Q. Can you just look at the end of paragraph 40 of your
 15 witness statement, if you have got it there, please.
 16 You indicate that you'd seen messages around this
 17 unpleasant contact between CS-F118. Do you feel able to
 18 say specifically what CS-F118 was asking CS-A1 to do, or
 19 do you not want to talk about that? It's at the end of
 20 paragraph 40. There are two sentences there.

21 **A. Yes, he was asking her to punch herself in the stomach
 22 in case she was pregnant.**

23 Q. I think in July 2017 -- in fact, forgive me, I should
 24 have dealt with this topic. In June 2017, on the 19th,
 25 there was a looked-after child review. By then,

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1 location she was in. You were concerned that CAMHS were
 2 not working with her, that the CAWNs did not seem to
 3 have stopped the contact with CS-F119 as well. Is that
 4 correct?

5 **A. Yes.**

6 Q. The police, I think, had suggested putting a photograph
 7 on social media of her when she was missing, but you
 8 didn't feel that was appropriate; correct?

9 **A. Correct. I just felt that it would actually prevent her
 10 from coming home. Whilst I did issue the police with
 11 a photograph, I was concerned that that point in time
 12 was not the right time to put it on social media.**

13 Q. I just have a final topic, please, and then perhaps it
 14 may be time for our mid-morning break. I would like to
 15 deal with the events of July 2017 as far as changing the
 16 location of where she was placed is concerned. Is this
 17 correct, that in early July, the police expressed the
 18 view -- I think this was a view that you and your
 19 husband both shared -- that CS-A1 should be placed in
 20 a different location, outside of the Warwickshire area?
 21 Is that right?

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. What was the local authority's view on that?

24 **A. Their concern was that she would try and get back to
 25 this network by bus or train and pose even further risk.**

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1 I think, CS-A1 had been allocated a CSE worker. Do you
 2 want to tell us a little bit about that review, please?

3 **A. Sorry, which -- where are we?**

4 Q. Going back to up to paragraph 37 of your witness
 5 statement. I think by that point, just to help you
 6 anchor it, you indicate that you raised concerns about
 7 the local authority's ability to keep her safe. You
 8 explain that you'd made an official complaint. You said
 9 that you were concerned that it was only your direct
 10 communication with the police that had led to the CAWN
 11 notices being issued. You express concerns about there
 12 not being a consistent CSE officer involved.

13 **A. Yes.**

14 Q. Is there anything else that you want to tell us about
 15 that?

16 **A. Yes, that there had been several CSE officers involved,
 17 but due to various reasons, either leaving, sickness,
 18 and whatever, there didn't seem to be anybody
 19 consistent. I felt that from going to meetings.
 20 I wasn't sure who would be there or if somebody would be
 21 there and who that person was. So I was concerned that,
 22 you know, if I thought that, then our daughter most
 23 certainly would be feeling that.**

24 Q. You were -- concerns about the foster placement were
 25 expressed by you, saying she was more at risk in the

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1 **It was not a view that we shared.**

2 Q. There came a point at the end of July 2017 where, after
 3 another missing episode, she was placed into police
 4 protection due to the risk posed to her remaining in the
 5 Warwickshire area; is that correct?

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. So the placement she was at concluded and you indicate
 8 in your witness statement that it's recorded that during
 9 that 84-day placement, she had gone missing 48 times,
 10 with some of those missing episodes lasting multiple
 11 days:

12 "I therefore think that we were right in objecting
 13 to this placement in the first place because it clearly
 14 meant that she was in the very area where she was most
 15 at risk of exploitation and hence was exploited. I do
 16 not feel the local authority listened to our concerns
 17 about this or took them seriously. This is a major
 18 concern for me about how they responded, how
 19 Social Services responded to the risk of CSE. I want to
 20 highlight at this point she'd only recently turned 14."

21 Is that correct?

22 **A. It is.**

23 Q. Finally on this topic, it is right, I think, at the end
 24 of July 2017, you made an official complaint to what was
 25 then the IPCC outlining your concerns about the police

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1 response. Is that correct?
 2 **A. Yes.**
 3 MS HILL: Chair, I see the time. As far as CS-A2's evidence
 4 is concerned, I have covered topics 1 to 3 on the topics
 5 list, so I do have some more questions for her. Perhaps
 6 it is appropriate to take our mid-morning break?
 7 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. We will return at 11.45 am.
 8 (11.31 am)
 9 (A short break)
 10 (11.45 am)
 11 MS HILL: CS-A2, just to orientate you, on the topics list
 12 I'd like to now deal with the chronology of events
 13 between 1 August 2017 and 16 February 2018, so that's
 14 topic 4 on our topics list. Turning first, then, to
 15 events of August 2017, is this right, that you have
 16 explained in your first witness statement that there was
 17 a further placement for CS-A1 at this point? You again
 18 saw a message to indicate that she was meeting up with
 19 an older male. You informed Social Services she was
 20 intending to abscond, and that you then say this:
 21 "Despite this intelligence, I was very surprised to
 22 learn that the foster carer had driven her to a friend's
 23 house later that day. CS-A1 was subsequently reported
 24 missing that night and messages indicated that sexual
 25 relations had taken place with CS-F124."

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1 simply unacceptable, given the local authority's
 2 responsibility to keep CS-A1 safe. She noted that there
 3 was no MACE meeting until May, though, from the
 4 documentation, the risk of CSE was prevalent before
 5 then. The guardian stated that CS-A1 should be having
 6 regular contact with her allocated CSE worker and that
 7 an intervention plan and a package of support should be
 8 put in place. The guardian noted this was all wholly
 9 unsatisfactory and believed that the court should seek
 10 an explanation from the CSE service manager as to why
 11 nothing had been progressed. Does that reflect what the
 12 guardian's view at that time was?
 13 **A. That was read to me by my solicitor. I wasn't aware of**
 14 **that level of detail during the court proceedings.**
 15 Q. Do those concerns that you now understand the guardian
 16 had at that time reflect or differ from the views that
 17 you had at that time?
 18 **A. It reinforces my view.**
 19 Q. Social Services had written to you, as I think we heard
 20 before the break, expressing your concerns and you had
 21 made complaints, I think, to them. Can you tell us
 22 a bit about the response that you received to that
 23 complaint in September 2017?
 24 **A. Well, the response was several months after I had put**
 25 **a complaint forward, which was disappointing because**

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1 And that around that time, so this is the summer of
 2 2017, there was an occasion when she was found at
 3 a particular hotel with CS-F124 by the police. Is that
 4 all correct?
 5 **A. It is, yes. I saw the messages, the following night**
 6 **that she had been reported missing, that was stating**
 7 **that she'd had intercourse with this older male.**
 8 **I passed the information over. In terms of being found**
 9 **in the hotel with this person, I didn't find that out**
 10 **until many months later, when this was dropped into**
 11 **conversation by another social worker which had changed**
 12 **at that point. So I didn't know about the hotel**
 13 **incident at this point.**
 14 Q. I think in August 2017, there was a hearing in relation
 15 to the interim care order application, and you've
 16 explained in brief terms that the guardian provided
 17 a report for those proceedings, which was quite critical
 18 of the situation that CS-A1 was in. Is this right, that
 19 you have explained that the guardian's report drew out
 20 the criticisms that it was the guardian's view that the
 21 local authority had not secured a stable placement for
 22 CS-A1, observed critically that she had only met her CSE
 23 worker, who had been allocated in May, on one occasion,
 24 that no interventions had been delivered. The
 25 children's guardian stated, you say, that this was

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1 **there were issues in there that were lessons that needed**
 2 **to be learnt. However, I looked at the letter and I was**
 3 **pleased to see that they acknowledged that the risk**
 4 **assessment was wrong and was too late.**
 5 Q. I think you explain they stated that the MACE meeting
 6 had had to be rearranged as many professionals were
 7 unavailable to attend and they admitted there had been
 8 delays with that. They also admitted she would have
 9 benefited from earlier intervention from the CSE team
 10 and the early risk assessment was wrong, the MACE
 11 meeting should have been earlier and the case should
 12 have been reviewed. Is that correct?
 13 **A. Yes. I was surprised that they didn't mention**
 14 **there -- I had sent an email in September 2016 to the**
 15 **IRO, which was to say our daughter, we believed, was at**
 16 **significant risk of CSE and, you know, an intervention**
 17 **was required, especially the fact she'd stayed overnight**
 18 **at this male's home. I never got a response to that,**
 19 **and it almost is a "Sliding Doors" moment for us, that**
 20 **if there had have been intervention earlier on, at the**
 21 **time that we were saying it verbally and also putting it**
 22 **in writing, which was actually nine months before the**
 23 **MACE meeting -- I was surprised there was no reference**
 24 **to that whatsoever in that letter.**
 25 Q. The response to your complaint I think was

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1 in September 2017. I will just deal with a few more
 2 events, please, towards the end of 2017. I think you
 3 describe at paragraph 50 of your witness statement that,
 4 by October, her absconding behaviour was escalating.
 5 Social workers were reporting to you that she was
 6 texting them demanding to be moved to placements in
 7 a different area, threatening to run away if this was
 8 not happening. There were reports generally, I think,
 9 about her behaviour escalating. Then there was a LAC
 10 review on 14 December 2017. What are the key points
 11 that you want to draw out for the panel around that
 12 meeting, please?
 13 **A. I mentioned in that LAC review that the absconding had**
 14 **been reduced, the fact that she was out of area, but**
 15 **obviously it was still a big concern.**
 16 **I also said that there'd been no progress in terms**
 17 **of any plans to rehabilitate her back into our care and**
 18 **that there were no plans in place to keep her safe.**
 19 Q. I think there was mention of her changing schools due to
 20 an assault issue?
 21 **A. Yes.**
 22 Q. And it was said that she was unwilling to engage with
 23 the new CSE worker who had been allocated to her.
 24 **A. Yes.**
 25 Q. I think expressions of concern were given, weren't they,

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1 was made that there would be consideration of a Serious
 2 Case Review. Is that right?
 3 **A. Yes. We wrote to our MP and, before we saw the MP, he**
 4 **gave us a link of criteria that would need to be met for**
 5 **a Serious Case Review. We were pretty sure that that**
 6 **criteria was going to be met. I had a meeting with the**
 7 **director of -- Cornelia Heaney from the children's**
 8 **safeguarding board and was absolutely shocked that she**
 9 **didn't even know about my case.**
 10 Q. You say at paragraph 55, I think, of your witness
 11 statement that when, I think, contact was made on your
 12 behalf with the local children's safeguarding board, the
 13 reply you got was a referral had not been made for
 14 a Serious Case Review and that "they were unable to
 15 trace communication between us and the local authority".
 16 Is that correct?
 17 **A. That's right. And also the fact -- when I was**
 18 **requesting an SCR, she said that there was a similar**
 19 **case in Warwickshire that was too similar to our case**
 20 **that would warrant a SCR. She was just giving me the**
 21 **heads-up, really, and that, in itself, I found shocking,**
 22 **that lessons hadn't been learnt from the previous case**
 23 **if it was so similar.**
 24 **The other thing I want to say at this point is, it's**
 25 **not easy for the average person to find out who to**

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1 about her emotional health and well-being. The social
 2 worker, you describe at paragraph 52, said she was at
 3 high risk of CSE and continued to be attracted to risky
 4 situations and adults, is what you have written. Is
 5 that right?
 6 **A. Yes, that's right.**
 7 Q. There was another incident at the very end
 8 of December 2017, on 29 December 2017, when she was
 9 provided with alcohol, you say at paragraph 53 and was
 10 intoxicated enough to black out and needed to attend
 11 A&E. Do you want to tell us about that incident?
 12 **A. Yes. We were called by her to say that she was in**
 13 **hospital and I went to visit her and, again, my second**
 14 **shocking moment of seeing somebody who had drunk so much**
 15 **alcohol, enough to black out, and that somebody had**
 16 **called an ambulance.**
 17 Q. I'd like to deal now with the final events in the
 18 chronology, if you like, which is section 5 of
 19 the topics list, and then come back to some of
 20 the themes that you have tried to draw out, if I may.
 21 Can I just confirm that these points are correct.
 22 That because of your concerns, in early 2018, you spoke
 23 to your MP, who suggested making contact with the local
 24 children's safeguarding board, and also writing to the
 25 chief constable of the police. I think the suggestion

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1 **escalate to to get help. We are proactive parents who**
 2 **are actively trying to find help, and in desperation**
 3 **went to our MP. We didn't even know about the local**
 4 **children's safeguarding board.**
 5 Q. Is this correct, that you were in communication about
 6 the prospect of a Serious Case Review, and I think, in
 7 addition to the issue that you have just highlighted
 8 about there being another similar case in Warwickshire
 9 and a desire by the local authority not to duplicate
 10 work, the information was also given to you, was it,
 11 that there was going to be an internal audit and that
 12 that would be better than a Serious Case Review?
 13 **A. Yes, and we weren't keen on an audit, because obviously,**
 14 **you know, it's -- auditing your own internal procedures**
 15 **is not the best method, in our view. My husband had**
 16 **a very, very lengthy conversation with Cornelia Heaney**
 17 **to express we didn't want to go that route, we wanted**
 18 **something external. But, in the end, we had to accept**
 19 **that an audit was as good as we were going to get.**
 20 Q. You explain in paragraph 58 that after three months,
 21 when the audit results had not materialised, you then
 22 formally applied, you say, for a Serious Case Review.
 23 I think your earlier request you describe as being an
 24 initial request. Is that correct?
 25 **A. Yes. So we knew that there was going to be an audit and**

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1 **then, after three months, when we hadn't heard anything**
 2 **about it, we decided to apply for a Serious Case Review.**
 3 Q. You say in your evidence that Ms Heaney acknowledged the
 4 request, but expressed disappointment that you had not
 5 waited for the audit report; is that right?
 6 **A. That's right.**
 7 Q. As far as CS-A1 was concerned, is this right, that
 8 around this time she was continuing to abscond and be
 9 under the influence of drugs, and in May 2018 she was
 10 placed in a children's home placement that's referred to
 11 in your statement as children's home 9?
 12 **A. Yes.**
 13 Q. Do you want to tell us a little bit about your views
 14 about that?
 15 **A. At first, when it had been approached about a children's**
 16 **home and a previous foster carer had actually expressed**
 17 **to me that she really hoped that wouldn't be the route,**
 18 **we had absolutely no experience, and she -- the foster**
 19 **carer said negative things, that she wouldn't -- you**
 20 **know, that they aren't the same when they come out. So**
 21 **we did try to put a little bit of resistance up against**
 22 **that, for those reasons.**
 23 **However, it turned out to be her best placement to**
 24 **date, because boundaries were reinforced, structure to**
 25 **the day was reinforced, but most importantly, they were**

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1 Q. The audit carried out by the local authority eventually
 2 did reach certain conclusions and in due course the
 3 chair and panel may well look at that -- WCC000075,
 4 although I don't ask for it to be brought up on screen
 5 today.
 6 Can I try to summarise what you say at paragraph 61
 7 about the conclusions of that audit. The conclusions
 8 were that the assessments required improvement, there
 9 had been no single assessment for her between March 2017
 10 and April 2018. Implementation of plans required
 11 improvements. It noted that she did not believe all
 12 agencies identified CSE initially, that there was
 13 a delay in the MACE meeting taking place, a delay in the
 14 case being allocated to the CSE police meeting. The
 15 case would have benefited from an earlier mapping
 16 exercise of potential perpetrators which would have
 17 strengthened the decision making. Multi-agency working
 18 required improvements. The understanding of risk would
 19 have been strengthened by more professionals meeting
 20 prior to escalation to MACE. Communication was taking
 21 place on the phone or by emails, so there was a risk
 22 information was missed. This had been exacerbated by
 23 the fact the social worker was responding to crisis and
 24 the multiple placement changes and collective decision
 25 making regarding CSE was not robust enough. Supervision

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1 **following her, so if she went missing, they were able to**
 2 **follow her, and that had never been happening**
 3 **previously.**
 4 Q. You say at the end of paragraph 59:
 5 "Her behaviour also deteriorated at times and she
 6 continued to refuse to engage with professionals, but
 7 overall this was the most positive and longest placement
 8 yet for her."
 9 Is that right?
 10 **A. It was, yes. All the other placements had lasted**
 11 **a matter of months.**
 12 Q. In July 2018, CS-F124's bail expired and charges against
 13 him were dropped due to insufficient evidence. You say
 14 in your witness statement, despite there being text
 15 messages implying intercourse between him and CS-A1
 16 which had been supplied to the police, and despite CS-A1
 17 being found in a hotel room with him -- is there
 18 anything else that you would like to say about that?
 19 **A. We were silently confident that this would lead to**
 20 **a prosecution, for the reasons that you have just said,**
 21 **that CS-A1 was found in the hotel room not on one**
 22 **occasion, but on two occasions; the fact we had digital**
 23 **evidence to suggest that intercourse had taken place.**
 24 **And we were just really shocked when the charges were**
 25 **dropped.**

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1 required improvement. "This did not take place monthly
 2 during the scoping period, though it was now", said the
 3 report. It did acknowledge that this was a difficult
 4 case to manage and the local authority had to be
 5 reactive at times. Case recording and participation
 6 were both areas where the writer rated the local
 7 authority as good and you provide a copy to the inquiry
 8 of that letter from September 2018.
 9 Is there anything else that you want to say about
 10 the audit findings?
 11 **A. No, we have no knowledge of the internal procedures of**
 12 **the local authority, but it did make sense of why**
 13 **there'd been a failure in our case.**
 14 Q. You go on to explain in your witness statement then
 15 about the findings of Operation Delorean. This was
 16 a police operation that related to CS-A1 and I think
 17 you've been made aware of a report about that. Do you
 18 want to talk a little bit about that and about how you
 19 found the meeting?
 20 **A. Well, my husband and myself attended with Jill Fowler**
 21 **from Warwickshire Police and Amy Walker. We were hoping**
 22 **for some information as to why we'd found ourselves in**
 23 **this position, why there had been a failure, and the**
 24 **meeting focused upon -- almost like a snapshot of where**
 25 **the police were with some of the perpetrators that we**

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1 have discussed.
 2 **Out of that meeting, we were told that two**
 3 **perpetrators were going to be charged, which we were**
 4 **pleased about, or had been charged and been released on**
 5 **bail. We were really upset that all of the other**
 6 **perpetrators at that point in time, no further action.**
 7 **That was really disappointing to hear after what we had,**
 8 **you know, witnessed and lived through. It just didn't**
 9 **seem right. But we had to accept it.**
 10 **Then we were silently confident that at least two**
 11 **people would be charged, which would lead to**
 12 **a prosecution. Jill Fowler also showed empathy, and**
 13 **she --**
 14 Q. This is the DI --
 15 **A. -- yes, sorry, the DI -- said that if she had read that**
 16 **report as a parent, you know, she'd feel the way we did,**
 17 **basically.**
 18 Q. What did she say to you as well about the issue of an
 19 organised network in relation to CS-A1?
 20 **A. She said that she didn't believe it was an organised**
 21 **network because there was no criminal activity. We**
 22 **expressed our view that --**
 23 Q. Sorry to interrupt, in your statement you say "criminal
 24 gang activity". Is that the --
 25 **A. Yes, there was no criminal gang activity, yes. We**

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1 Q. Yes. Just bring us up to date with where --
 2 **A. From the children's home, she was placed a significant**
 3 **amount of time away out of county. So it would be**
 4 **difficult to get back.**
 5 Q. Is the position that CS-A1 is now living in supported
 6 independent --
 7 **A. Oh, sorry, I do apologise, there was another placement**
 8 **within Warwickshire which lasted a number of weeks, and**
 9 **it ended because they felt that the people that were**
 10 **caring for her, it wasn't adequate for her needs, and so**
 11 **that placement ended very shortly.**
 12 Q. She seems to have settled well, you say, into the
 13 supported independent living, where she is now; is that
 14 right?
 15 **A. Yes.**
 16 Q. You say at the end of paragraph 65 of your witness
 17 statement:
 18 "There have not been significant issues of
 19 absconding and behaviour, and we are pleased that CS-A1
 20 is now removed geographically from her old network."
 21 Is that correct?
 22 **A. It is, yes, and also I'm not aware of any episodes of**
 23 **absconding back into Warwickshire from there.**
 24 Q. Thank you very much. I'd like to move now to the
 25 remaining part of the questions that I have for you,

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1 **expressed our view that we thought that there was**
 2 **a network because the perpetrators were known to each**
 3 **other, and I didn't put this to the police, I sent the**
 4 **police an email, because I checked Facebook accounts so**
 5 **I could find out exactly who was known to each other.**
 6 **I can read it out for the purpose now, if you want me**
 7 **to, but there are several who are on each of**
 8 **the Facebook accounts, so they were known to each other**
 9 **and for us, the definition of that is, you know,**
 10 **organised, and it's activity.**
 11 Q. You explain in your witness statement, in the final part
 12 of the witness statement, where you bring us up to date,
 13 if you like, with the most recent events, you confirm
 14 that in October 2018 a Serious Case Review request was
 15 rejected by Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
 16 You say that you asked for the specific reason for that,
 17 but you never received a response. Is that correct?
 18 **A. Correct, yes. We were advised by a business manager**
 19 **that it wasn't going ahead and we have responded to that**
 20 **but had no response back.**
 21 Q. You explain that, although the placement at the
 22 children's home was a positive one, there came a point
 23 when CS-A1 was moved. Do you want to tell us where she
 24 was moved to from there?
 25 **A. From the children's home?**

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1 CS-A2, which is to indicate to the panel that in your
 2 witness statement you have done several things that the
 3 panel can read in due course, if they wish, but,
 4 essentially, you have gone through the institutional
 5 witness statements that you have seen from both the
 6 police and the local authority, and I think you have
 7 tried to give some observations for the panel about the
 8 particular themes that you know that this investigation
 9 is looking at. So I'd like to just try and take you
 10 through those themes, if I may.
 11 Dealing first with the issue of profiling, and you
 12 understand what we mean by that, is there anything else
 13 that you would like to say about that?
 14 **A. I don't really have any experience on the profiling, but**
 15 **what I would say is that these perpetrators were -- some**
 16 **of them were known to the local authority, and they were**
 17 **known to each other, so in terms of profiling, there was**
 18 **information that could have been used already.**
 19 Q. You've expressed already, at several points in your
 20 evidence, concerns about some of the geographical
 21 locations where CS-A1 was located; is that right?
 22 **A. Yes.**
 23 Q. Is there anything else that you would like to say about
 24 the issue of disruption?
 25 **A. Yes, and this isn't -- what I'm about to say is not**

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<p>1 anything detrimental about the police per se or any 2 individuals, but the fact that there were no 3 consequences that we saw evident in the group meant that 4 CSE was able to continue. The police seemed very 5 focused upon charges that could lead to a prosecution 6 and we were very focused, obviously, on protecting our 7 daughter from CSE and harm. Within our case, the police 8 always seemed to be a few steps behind what was going 9 on, and I was giving them new information quite a lot of 10 the time, and, quite frankly, as parents, I don't know 11 how a child of 14 was always managing to be a few steps 12 ahead of an entire police force.</p> <p>13 In terms of the disruption tactics, we were really 14 shocked that surveillance wasn't used. Because we gave 15 some direct information about where she was going to be 16 at certain times, we just thought that the most obvious 17 thing would be that they would watch what was going 18 on -- either follow her or, more importantly, 19 surveillance on the perpetrators that she was visiting 20 and then action could be taken. I was given a number of 21 reasons of why surveillance and, you know, the lack of 22 action wasn't taken -- do you want me to ...?</p> <p>23 Q. Do you want to just explain to the panel, when you're 24 talking about surveillance in this context, CS-A2, what 25 do you mean?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 A. I mean actually watching the house and the perpetrator. 2 At one point, I was so concerned that that's what was 3 required and needed in this case, because she was 4 missing so many times and we knew where she was going, 5 that that would be the simple resolution, that if the 6 police could find -- you know, watch the perpetrator and 7 then see our daughter enter the premises, that something 8 could be done.</p> <p>9 I did also mention to Deborah Young of the police 10 that I would be willing to hire a private detective and 11 pay for that, for surveillance, and I was told that 12 I could do that but the evidence couldn't be used and 13 the reason why I didn't go ahead with that is that, if 14 it was reported that she had entered the house and the 15 police hadn't got the resources to send to the house, it 16 would be futile. So, based on that, I did not take that 17 route.</p> <p>18 Q. I think you have already given evidence that your view 19 was that the CAWNs were used too late, were driven by 20 pressure from you and your husband, and that you felt 21 that the officers had different levels of understanding 22 about the CAWN process?</p> <p>23 A. Yes, the CAWN seemed to be the only tactic or the only 24 tangible thing that we could see that was going on with 25 her and the perpetrators, and since then we have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>
<p>1 discovered a number of other -- in the witness 2 statements of the police, a number of other disruption 3 tactics which are mentioned -- Recovery Order, Sexual 4 Risk Order, CSE Disruption Notice, Sexual Offences Act 5 2003, sections 14 and 15, Police and Criminal Evidence 6 Act, section 18, that relates to technology specifically 7 referencing CORVUS and COMPACT to enable the capture of 8 evidential material, not just intelligence from mobile 9 phones such as text messages. So we are left wondering 10 why that wasn't used in our case, and CAWNs seemed to be 11 the preferred method.</p> <p>12 Overall, I have to say that the success of 13 the disruption tactics that were used is a very small 14 dent to my very lengthy witness statement of all the 15 incidents of sexual exploitation that actually happened 16 to my daughter.</p> <p>17 Q. I think you've seen some more recent evidence since your 18 witness statement was written. You have seen various 19 statements from the police and I think the council, in 20 particular the police. Is there anything else that you 21 want to say to sort of respond to what the panel will 22 hear later today, perhaps?</p> <p>23 A. I did see in one of the paragraphs, I think it is 27, of 24 the police witness statement --</p> <p>25 Q. Is it the most recent witness statement?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. So paragraph 27 --</p> <p>3 A. That relates to visiting the home of a 17-year-old they 4 believed our daughter was visiting.</p> <p>5 Q. This is about a missing episode in 2017 when CS-A1 had 6 spent time at the address of a 17-year-old male? 7 Paragraph 27. Internal page 6 of our numbering. Is it 8 that one?</p> <p>9 A. Yes. With that individual there, the only thing I would 10 say is, yes, it's been used as a disruption activity 11 there, but the disruption was obviously too late. The 12 fact that our daughter -- I was taking her for 13 contraception at this point, would show it was too late.</p> <p>14 Q. Our next theme, as you know, is empathy and concern for 15 child victims. I think you have given evidence in your 16 witness statement that the police and local authority 17 did display empathy and concern for you and your 18 daughter, and you've been particularly fulsome in 19 talking about the most recent social workers. Is there 20 anything else that you would like to say about that 21 theme?</p> <p>22 A. Yes. There was empathy for us, certainly. I can't 23 comment on empathy for my daughter, as I didn't see the 24 police or the local authority with her in meetings, 25 perhaps once, so I can't comment on that. But there is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 certainly empathy for us.</p> <p>2 As I mentioned earlier, DI Fowler said at the</p> <p>3 Delorean meeting she was reading that report and she</p> <p>4 would feel the same way that we did.</p> <p>5 Q. As far as the theme of risk assessment and protection</p> <p>6 from harm is concerned, we spent a little time going</p> <p>7 through what the views of the guardian were in the care</p> <p>8 proceedings and going through what the audit of</p> <p>9 the local authority findings were, and you have</p> <p>10 obviously touched on this issue as you have gone through</p> <p>11 your evidence. But is there anything else you would</p> <p>12 like to add on that theme? You have talked about the</p> <p>13 MACE meeting being held too late, the delayed</p> <p>14 recognition of the risk to her and things of that</p> <p>15 nature.</p> <p>16 A. Well, if we could just go back to the safeguarding</p> <p>17 board, the safeguarding board didn't know who she was.</p> <p>18 We put complaints forward to the IOPC on three</p> <p>19 occasions -- in August 2018, again in October 2018 and</p> <p>20 in December, the professional standards -- and no</p> <p>21 response. So in terms of protection from harm, it's --</p> <p>22 and obviously the issue that I mentioned to you earlier,</p> <p>23 the fact that the CSE was too late, was wrong, and that</p> <p>24 we had put it in writing nine months before the MACE</p> <p>25 meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 Q. This sort of feeds very much into our fourth theme,</p> <p>2 which is that of missing children, Return Home</p> <p>3 Interviews and looked-after children. Without giving</p> <p>4 any specific number, CS-A1 had gone missing a large</p> <p>5 number of times, a very large number of times, including</p> <p>6 when in care, and you've expressed in your witness</p> <p>7 statement some concerns about the effectiveness of</p> <p>8 the RHI process. Is there anything else that you would</p> <p>9 like to add on that theme?</p> <p>10 A. Not really. Just that the feedback that we had from it</p> <p>11 was little and didn't seem to tell us too much about</p> <p>12 what was going on. I would say that, you know, our</p> <p>13 daughter is probably not giving a lot of information to</p> <p>14 them, but it didn't seem extremely important.</p> <p>15 Q. As far as partnership working is concerned, you have</p> <p>16 already noted the audit finding that multi-agency</p> <p>17 working required improvement, you have explained that</p> <p>18 you were told that CAMHS could not help CS-A1, and</p> <p>19 I think you have already expressed the view -- I think</p> <p>20 you may have said this, but I may have got this wrong,</p> <p>21 but certainly, at paragraph 110 of your witness</p> <p>22 statement, you expressed the view that when she was</p> <p>23 placed out of county, the sharing of information out of</p> <p>24 county did not seem to work very well. Is that correct?</p> <p>25 A. That's right. It seemed to be that the systems they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>
<p>1 were using seemed older systems and they weren't able to</p> <p>2 locate information quickly and pass that information on.</p> <p>3 Quite often, if she was out of county -- this is an</p> <p>4 instance with reporting her missing anyway: you have to</p> <p>5 constantly repeat everything every time, to say she's</p> <p>6 vulnerable, all of the same information. If you think</p> <p>7 of all the times we had to report her missing, you know,</p> <p>8 we had to just keep on saying the same messages over and</p> <p>9 over, and speed between the two counties when she was</p> <p>10 placed in one county and another was slow, in terms of</p> <p>11 trying to locate her whereabouts.</p> <p>12 Q. Our final theme is audit review and performance</p> <p>13 improvement. You have already expressed your concerns</p> <p>14 that the threshold was considered not to be met for</p> <p>15 a Serious Case Review and I think you have touched on</p> <p>16 your concerns about the IOPC. Is there anything else</p> <p>17 you would like to say about that theme?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. You set out in your witness statement some examples of</p> <p>20 good practice that you highlight, as far as the local</p> <p>21 authority are concerned, at paragraph 128. You note</p> <p>22 that you have seen a big improvement in the quality of</p> <p>23 social workers once you involved solicitors in her case.</p> <p>24 You say that meetings were held about CS-A1 on a number</p> <p>25 of occasions, as you've explained. You have indicated</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>	<p>1 that there was identification by the local authority of</p> <p>2 a special educational provider that she has attended for</p> <p>3 the past 18 months and have supplied the transport for</p> <p>4 her to go to and from the school, which has been very</p> <p>5 good for her. You speak positively about the children's</p> <p>6 home placement. Is there anything else, in terms of</p> <p>7 a positive or good practice, that you want to highlight</p> <p>8 for the chair and panel?</p> <p>9 A. Yes. On the police, their first response when reported</p> <p>10 missing --</p> <p>11 Q. Forgive me. I was going to go to that.</p> <p>12 A. Okay, on the local authority.</p> <p>13 Q. The local authority.</p> <p>14 A. School provision was good, one of them. They also held</p> <p>15 lots of meetings. Bad, which is what you have already</p> <p>16 said, CSE too late, the placements and the CSE</p> <p>17 assessment was wrong, and also the fact that she was out</p> <p>18 of school for coming up for 18 months. And obviously</p> <p>19 that had a massive impact. She was willing to go to</p> <p>20 school but there seemed to be a problem with passing</p> <p>21 information as she moved between counties, and also with</p> <p>22 finding a suitable provision for her, but she was</p> <p>23 willing to attend, and obviously that had effects</p> <p>24 because if you are out of school for that amount of time</p> <p>25 and you're home and you're not in a structured</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

1 **environment during the day, you're an easy target for**
 2 **perpetrators.**
 3 Q. Just remind the chair and panel, please, the period of
 4 time she was out of school, the 18 months you're
 5 describing. Anchor that in her ages, or indeed the
 6 years?
 7 **A. I would say from 14 to 16. It was 18 months. Not**
 8 **continuous, but there was very small academic provision**
 9 **during that period. It was not regular. I did put**
 10 **a complaint forward to the local authority a few times,**
 11 **and put it in writing to them using their correct**
 12 **procedures, and I have never had a response back why she**
 13 **was out for so long.**
 14 Q. Finally, in terms of the police, at 128, paragraph (c),
 15 you give these indications of good practice that you
 16 would like to highlight, that Detective Marcus Franklin,
 17 whom you have already mentioned, deserves particular
 18 praise for his work and flexible and creative use of
 19 CAWNs. The police did issue a police protection order
 20 to protect CS-A1:
 21 "When police were called out to a missing incident,
 22 their first response, visiting my home or CS-A1's
 23 placement, was always carried out and was consistent in
 24 approach. They did revoke the licence for the
 25 particular hotel and with intelligence that they were

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1 **A. I do have something that I would just like to read,**
 2 **a couple of sentences, if I'm able to do that, if your**
 3 **questioning is finished?**
 4 **My daughter was not protected and was let down by**
 5 **the local authority and the police. Multi-agency**
 6 **working was ultimately ineffective in preventing CSE in**
 7 **this case. The procedures appear adequate and**
 8 **comprehensive on paper, but in practice they did not**
 9 **work and did not keep her safe from harm. The CSE risk**
 10 **assessment was too late and was wrong. Certain foster**
 11 **placements were inappropriate. Police disruption**
 12 **tactics were generally ineffective and known**
 13 **perpetrators were able to continue to abuse her with**
 14 **impunity. On a more positive note, I'm pleased to**
 15 **report my daughter is no longer absconding and no longer**
 16 **using drugs. She passed her exams and is enjoying**
 17 **college. She has a close relationship again with her**
 18 **parents and family and is in daily contact with**
 19 **overnight stays. Her family, who love her, will always**
 20 **be there to give her the support she is going to need**
 21 **when she realises and has to come to terms with the**
 22 **terrible and despicable crimes that have been committed**
 23 **against her. Thank you for listening to my honest**
 24 **version of events. Every child has the right to be**
 25 **protected from CSE.**

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1 given on occasions they were swift at recovering her and
 2 returning her back to the placement."
 3 Is there anything else you would like to say in that
 4 category?
 5 **A. Yes. As I mentioned, the first response when I reported**
 6 **her missing was good, it was very consistent. It was**
 7 **every time she was reported missing. Also, they didn't**
 8 **appear to be frustrated that she was missing on so many**
 9 **occasions. They seemed to be good at knocking on doors**
 10 **when she was reported missing.**
 11 **Also, I'd like to mention that a couple of times**
 12 **they used direct intelligence that I supplied to them**
 13 **from the phone and were able to locate her using their**
 14 **live control room, because I could hear it in the**
 15 **background and they were able to actually locate her.**
 16 **What was bad was, despite having procedures in**
 17 **place, a wealth of procedures in place that I've seen,**
 18 **they did not transfer into the practical -- into the**
 19 **practice of preventing my daughter experiencing and**
 20 **suffering severe harm and CSE and they did not appear to**
 21 **be proactive, as we would have expected, in these**
 22 **situations; it's more reactive.**
 23 Q. Is there anything else, CS-A2, that you think I have not
 24 covered or that you would like to explain to the chair
 25 and panel?

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1 MS HILL: Thank you very much. Those are all the questions
 2 I have. Thank you very much. I know it has not been
 3 easy answering all those questions, but, chair, those
 4 are all the questions I have for CS-A2.
 5 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. I have no questions, but
 6 I will ask my colleagues if they do. Ms Sharpling?
 7 MS SHARPLING: No, thank you very much, chair.
 8 THE CHAIR: Mr Frank?
 9 MR FRANK: No, thank you.
 10 THE CHAIR: And Sir Malcolm?
 11 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: No, thank you.
 12 THE CHAIR: I want to say to the witness that we were very
 13 impressed by her frank and compelling account of what it
 14 was like to be the parent of a sexually-exploited child.
 15 Your evidence will be valuable to the inquiry in
 16 reaching our final conclusions and we are all pleased to
 17 hear of the current positive position with your
 18 daughter. We wish you and your daughter very well in
 19 the future. Thank you.
 20 **A. Thank you.**
 21 MS HILL: Thank you very much, chair.
 22 (The witness withdrew)
 23 MS HILL: We are going to move now to call Mr Minns but we
 24 need to have a short break in order to arrange for the
 25 changeover of the witnesses.

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1 Perhaps we can take a five-minute break, chair? The
 2 core participants will be made aware when the hearing is
 3 going to restart.
 4 THE CHAIR: Yes, of course.
 5 (12.24 pm)
 6 (A short break)
 7 (12.32 pm)
 8 THE CHAIR: Ms Hill?
 9 MS HILL: I call now, please, Nigel Minns.
 10 MR NIGEL MINNS (sworn)
 11 Examination by MS HILL
 12 MS HILL: Good afternoon, Mr Minns. You are Nigel Minns; is
 13 that right?
 14 **A. Yes.**
 15 Q. Your title is Strategic Director at Warwickshire County
 16 Council:
 17 "My current post also includes the Statutory
 18 Director of Children's Services and Adult Social
 19 Services responsibilities and line management of
 20 the Director of Public Health."
 21 Is that right?
 22 **A. Yes, that's absolutely right.**
 23 Q. You have given the inquiry a series of witness
 24 statements. Your first witness statement is WCC000236.
 25 Second statement giving details about some particular

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1 **I should point out that my predecessor, there was**
 2 **a slight overlap, so my predecessor left on**
 3 **30 September 2017.**
 4 Q. Can I bring up, please, some of your first witness
 5 statement where you deal with our theme of empathy and
 6 concern for child victims. So can I bring up, please,
 7 WCC000236_006-007. Mr Minns, if you are following in
 8 your witness statement, it is paragraphs 31 to 40, first
 9 of all, please, of your first witness statement.
 10 I think in those paragraphs you set out some of
 11 the initiatives that the council have taken around the
 12 issue of appropriate language and empathy. Can you just
 13 draw out the key points from those paragraphs for the
 14 chair and panel, please?
 15 **A. Yes, of course. I think -- if I could deal with kind of**
 16 **two elements. So, in general terms, in terms of**
 17 **empathy, I genuinely believe that we have had, certainly**
 18 **during my time, a child-centred approach. Over the last**
 19 **couple of years, we have spent a lot of time embedding**
 20 **a restorative practice approach in Warwickshire, which**
 21 **is very much about relationships and working with**
 22 **children and families.**
 23 **If I may, I would say I was quite surprised by some**
 24 **of the opening arguments from the participation about**
 25 **belief. I genuinely do not believe that belief is the**

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1 children is WCC000244. Third witness statement
 2 WCC000363. Can I, chair, with your permission, please,
 3 adduce all of those statements in full?
 4 There are some further witness statements that you
 5 have given, Mr Minns, that I will come to deal with one
 6 by one, because it may not be necessary to adduce all of
 7 those. I think your most recent statements deal with
 8 some discrete points, but I will deal with those
 9 separately, if I may. I think those first three
 10 statements are where you give most of your generic
 11 evidence about the systems and processes in place; is
 12 that right?
 13 **A. It is.**
 14 Q. Can you tell us a little bit, please, about your
 15 professional background?
 16 **A. Yes. I am a primary schoolteacher by background.**
 17 **I worked in a number of schools, a number of local**
 18 **authority advisory services. I've spent time on**
 19 **secondment on two occasions with the Department for**
 20 **Education. I joined Warwickshire in 2014,**
 21 **in April 2014, as what was then called Head of**
 22 **Education. And I was appointed as the Strategic**
 23 **Director for People actually during one of my**
 24 **secondments to the DfE. I took up that post on**
 25 **1 September 2017.**

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1 **major focus for us in Warwickshire. I believe that we**
 2 **do believe young people. I believe that we listen to**
 3 **their experiences. Our greatest challenge, actually, in**
 4 **general is persuading young people that they are being**
 5 **exploited.**
 6 **In terms of the specifics set out in my statement**
 7 **about victim-blaming language, we have, of course, done**
 8 **a lot of work around this, and, again, acknowledging**
 9 **what others have said, we have incorporated a focus on**
 10 **victim-blaming language into our strategy, into our**
 11 **procedures. We have adopted the guidance produced by**
 12 **the National Police Chiefs' Council, which was produced**
 13 **for the Children's Society, and we have developed**
 14 **multi-agency training -- sorry, multi-agency training**
 15 **has been delivered for all front-line teams by**
 16 **Barnardo's.**
 17 **I do think that the CSE and missing team act as**
 18 **champions and they do challenge inappropriate language**
 19 **use.**
 20 **It is difficult to extract those from our case**
 21 **files, but we have included an example with my evidence.**
 22 **I should say that we do not claim success in having**
 23 **eliminated victim-blaming language. This is work that**
 24 **we have been doing for some time. It is ongoing work.**
 25 **I believe it will be ongoing work on a continuous basis,**

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1 **and I'm happy to explain why I believe that's the case.**
2 **I certainly have identified examples in my review of**
3 **these cases of what I would consider to be victim**
4 **blaming language or a lack of empathy in the language**
5 **used, and one of our intentions, as a result of this, is**
6 **we have a whole staff conference actually next week for**
7 **our children and families service, and one of our**
8 **intentions is to use examples to go back and reiterate**
9 **our concerns about that language to all of our staff.**
10 Q. When you're saying "looking at these cases", are you
11 meaning the children whose cases you were particularly
12 asked to provide evidence about to this investigation?
13 **A. I am in this particular instance, yes.**
14 Q. So it is those files that you have looked at and seen
15 some evidence of language that you now consider should
16 be the subject of some training and reflection; is that
17 right?
18 **A. Yes, that's definitely the case.**
19 Q. Can I ask to bring up, please, within your second
20 witness statement -- in fact, I think it is a little bit
21 further on in the same witness statement. Can I go,
22 please, to paragraphs 41 through to 45 in this witness
23 statement -- in fact, on to 46. A related topic,
24 Mr Minns, beyond the use of language is around the
25 accessibility of services for children and young people

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1 **we have very specifically done is talk to that community**
2 **about becoming foster carers, about becoming adopters,**
3 **to ensure that they are as well represented as we can**
4 **and provide a different experience amongst our foster**
5 **care and adoption cohort.**
6 Q. In your second witness statement, you refer to this
7 broad theme, please -- I will bring up
8 WCC000363_008-009, and scroll in on paragraphs 40 to 45.
9 You have provided some further detail there about the
10 management input and about the language and the
11 assessment tool that's been used. Is there anything in
12 particular from these paragraphs that you wish to draw
13 out? I think what you have done here is, this is where
14 you've quoted some parts of paperwork that's been looked
15 at. Is that right?
16 **A. Yes, that's absolutely right. So in paragraph 42, for**
17 **example, there's an example of where the team challenged**
18 **an assessment tool that they received, and suggested**
19 **alternative language, which may be more -- well, is more**
20 **appropriate, in terms of how that young person and/or**
21 **their behaviour should be described.**
22 Q. That includes -- I think we can see reference to "risky
23 behaviours", references to "seeking opportunities for
24 contact", references about "participating in sexual
25 activity", and I think in the further example at 43,

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1 from BME communities. I think at paragraphs 41 to 46 of
2 your first witness statement -- WCC000236_007. That
3 might just help remind you, Mr Minns, of the written
4 evidence you gave. Perhaps you can just draw out the
5 key points for the panel around services for children
6 and young people from BME communities and LGBTQ
7 communities that you have explained there?
8 **A. Yes. So I should probably, for context, state that**
9 **Warwickshire is a predominantly white area. Around**
10 **93 per cent of our population is white -- from various**
11 **white backgrounds, I should say. The next largest group**
12 **is the South-Asian community, and you will note in**
13 **paragraph 41 we talk about work specifically with**
14 **a community group in that particular community.**
15 **We have done a lot of work around promotion -- I'm**
16 **sure I will have the opportunity to talk about the**
17 **"Something's Not Right" campaign, but we have sought to**
18 **use a range of promotional literature imagery which**
19 **addresses those communities which reflects and**
20 **represents those communities, and we have done**
21 **considerable work with Pride locally around LGBTQ**
22 **communities, and as well with other community groups**
23 **that support that particular community.**
24 **I'm sure we will also talk about placements in the**
25 **course of the next period, but, again, one of the things**

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1 reference to "not putting herself at risk". Is that
2 right?
3 **A. Yes, it is, absolutely.**
4 Q. Can you give us an indication of when, in our
5 timeline -- this year, last year, the year before; we
6 are looking at everything from the last few years -- was
7 the assessment at 42 provided? Can you tell us when
8 that was?
9 **A. I can't tell you the timeline, I'm afraid, at the**
10 **moment. What I can say is that this work has been**
11 **ongoing over the entire period, and both -- you know,**
12 **throughout your timeline there will be evidence of work**
13 **being done to challenge and to promote positive**
14 **language.**
15 **There will also, throughout the timeline, be**
16 **evidence of places where that hasn't happened as**
17 **effectively as we would like, although I would strongly**
18 **suggest that that has diminished year on year, if you**
19 **like.**
20 Q. I think you've accepted that, in the list of cases that
21 you were asked to look at, or children's cases you were
22 asked to look at, for this inquiry, there are also some
23 examples, are there not, of that sort of language?
24 **A. Yes, there are.**
25 Q. I don't know if we need to perhaps just bring up one.

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<p>1 Can we bring up just one example, please. This is 2 CS-A216. The page in question, please, is WCC000197. 3 Just to give the chair and panel perhaps a little bit of 4 context before we look at this document, CS-A216 was 5 considered to be at high risk of child sexual 6 exploitation from, I think, 2017 to 2018. There were 7 several different males that were believed to have 8 abused this child. She was reported to have ADHD and 9 had some mental health difficulties. 10 We have provided a timeline, just to put this into 11 context, the chair and panel have been able to read to 12 themselves, that runs broadly from November 2016, when 13 she was 13, to June 2018, when she was 15, and there is 14 evidence that suggests that she was moved around 15 different towns in her home area for the purpose of 16 sexual exploitation. That's a very brief summary. 17 I hope that's a fair context. 18 If we look, please, at this document at WCC000197, 19 is what we see here an assessment tool of the type that 20 you use in Warwickshire? 21 A. It is, yes. It's the assessment tool we currently use. 22 Q. This is the NWC's child sexual exploitation assessment 23 tool; is that right? 24 A. Yes, it is. We were a pilot area for the tool following 25 our desire to change our approach to assessment. We'd</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 engaged with Coventry University about developing a new 2 tool which was not a screening tool, which was not 3 a grading, if you like, or ranking tool, that didn't 4 have a numerical kind of calculation, and we -- at the 5 time, they were approached by, I think it's the Centre 6 for Expertise in Child Sexual Exploitation -- I may have 7 got the name wrong -- to do similar work and that 8 resulted in us becoming a pilot area for this tool and 9 we subsequently adopted it. 10 Q. Thank you. We will come to look at that theme in more 11 detail, but just in terms of this particular child, we 12 can anchor this date for this assessment, I think, at 13 15 June 2018, and I think, just briefly, if you look 14 into the document, please, Danny, at page 6 and page 7, 15 please. We can see under the heading 4.5 "Further 16 details" on the left-hand side on page 6: 17 "A CSE assessment was completed as CS-A216 was 18 placing herself at risk. Conclusion was that her 19 current behaviours and feelings about herself make her 20 vulnerable and places her at risk of exploitation." 21 Then over the page, under 5.1: 22 "CS-A216 said she is sexually active and has had 23 sexual intercourse with three males ..." 24 Looking now at the language of "placing herself at 25 risk" is that another example of the sort of language</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>
<p>1 that you would hope is going to be challenged? 2 A. This is a very specific example. I think it is a good 3 example. And it is an example that's being challenged. 4 Just to explain, this particular element of 5 the assessment is a summary of a previous assessment 6 which took place in November 2017. I think this plays 7 very strongly to Dr Beckett's comments in her evidence 8 about the fact that, once language becomes embedded in 9 files, it tends to become repeated and I think that's 10 exactly what happened here. 11 So the original assessment used that language. That 12 was replicated in this particular file. 13 I should say, we have gone back to both the author 14 of the original assessment and of this assessment to 15 explain why that language is inappropriate. 16 MS HILL: Chair, I see we have gone slightly beyond quarter 17 to. Would it be all right for me to put one more 18 document on this theme and then that will complete the 19 evidence on this theme? 20 THE CHAIR: We must finish just before 1.00 pm. 21 MS HILL: I'm grateful. Thank you, chair. Do I take it 22 from that that you are content for me to continue until 23 just before 1.00 pm? 24 THE CHAIR: Yes. 25 MS HILL: Mr Minns, can I ask you to look at the evidence of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 another child, please, CS-A151. WCC000188. Just before 2 we do that, as far as the panel are concerned, the panel 3 have been provided with a timeline which suggests 4 CS-A151 was abused from the age of 13 when she first 5 came to the attention of the agencies in Warwickshire. 6 She was thought to be a looked-after child from 7 a different area. She was travelling to other areas 8 with a 15-year-old child, CS-A146, and both were 9 sexually exploited. She was tracked by multi-agency 10 meetings in Warwickshire for several months in 2018. 11 This document is dated December 2018, CS-A151. Can we 12 look, please, at internal pages _004 to _005, Danny. 13 Scroll in, please, on internal page _004 to the bit 14 where it says "officers readying". It is about 15 two-thirds of the way down. It says there: 16 "Officers readying for CPS submission." 17 I think this is police officers preparing paperwork 18 to go to the CPS: 19 "From a victim point of view, no significant 20 updates. 21 "Whilst police have been reviewing social care 22 files, case recording and language used by professionals 23 will be quite harmful. Key witnesses may potentially be 24 'unreliable'. 25 Do you want to provide any comment on what's said</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

1 there?

2 **A. Yes. We have, again, looked at this as an example.**

3 **CS-A151 is not a Warwickshire child. Our case files are**

4 **quite limited on her because, obviously, her main social**

5 **care files sit with her home local authority.**

6 **We cannot find any comments within those files --**

7 **within our files that she is described as unreliable or**

8 **that anyone else has described her as unreliable.**

9 **I would say that, in looking at this, we also looked**

10 **at the other children whose ciphers are included there,**

11 **whose names are included, in our assessments, and we did**

12 **find examples of inappropriate language -- not the use**

13 **of the word "unreliable", different inappropriate**

14 **language -- in one of those cases, and we have sought to**

15 **go back to the social worker in question, but neither**

16 **the social worker nor her manager currently work for**

17 **Warwickshire.**

18 Q. Can you provide any comment generally on whether or not

19 the use of language by professionals can have an impact

20 on criminal proceedings?

21 **A. I'm sure it can, yes, absolutely. There is**

22 **a responsibility, I think, about us -- for us to test**

23 **the reliability of evidence generally, in terms of what**

24 **we record in our files. That is an important function**

25 **of a child protection service. But, quite clearly, what**

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1 **good examples of appropriate language to use. My**

2 **concern about the previous language is that case files**

3 **are used by different professionals over a period of**

4 **time, and I think it loses the specificity in some**

5 **cases, and I think, when professionals come --**

6 **a subsequent social worker, other professionals, come to**

7 **work with a young person, it is really important to know**

8 **what mechanism or what means the perpetrators were using**

9 **to seek to exploit young children. In this case, the**

10 **reference, for example, to drugs is entirely lost in**

11 **some of the suggested examples. I think we need to be**

12 **really careful. So it is something that I want to look**

13 **at again.**

14 **I was taken by the work that Durham have done with**

15 **their young people around this particular -- it reflects**

16 **work we have done with young people around, for example,**

17 **children in care. I think there is an opportunity for**

18 **us to do more work around appropriate alternatives with**

19 **young people in the future.**

20 Q. Just a final reference before we break, Mr Minns. This

21 is an extract from the police witness statement,

22 WSP000176_024-025. If we can scroll in on paragraph 91.

23 This is an extract, Mr Minns, to orientate you from the

24 Warwickshire Police statement, from Detective

25 Superintendent Hill, from whom we will hear later today.

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1 **we wouldn't want to do is for that evidence to be -- to**

2 **lack empathy or to be victim blaming.**

3 Q. I think you have provided the chair and panel with

4 a document they may have looked at already, the National

5 Police Chiefs' Council guidance on appropriate language.

6 That has certain alternatives suggested for a range of

7 phrases that are now considered inappropriate. For

8 completeness, it is WCC000174_001 -- I think, in fact,

9 the whole of that guide will be relevant.

10 That document, I think, has been cascaded, has it,

11 to the childcare professionals in your organisation?

12 **A. It has, yes. It's been adopted by the partnership, so**

13 **to us and also to partners.**

14 **Could I make a particular comment about this**

15 **document, because I think it's very useful, I think it**

16 **has many, many benefits. But in my review of these**

17 **cases, I do have to express some concern about some of**

18 **the suggested alternatives which I hope is relevant for**

19 **the inquiry. I'm looking particularly at page 4 --**

20 Q. Sorry to cut across you. Can we bring that up,

21 WCC000174_004.

22 **A. The last option is my example specifically, so about**

23 **offering him or her drugs, seemingly in return for sex.**

24 **Looking at the alternatives, for me, the last two**

25 **alternatives are very reasonable, and I think would be**

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1 He illustrates at paragraph 91 that, as part of

2 Operation Jive, officers were required to review third

3 party material on a particular child and located

4 numerous comments, a number of comments, made about the

5 child being promiscuous. I think the net result of what

6 he is describing here is that there was some training

7 given by the county council CSE coordinator to the

8 police. Is that correct?

9 **A. That is absolutely correct. I believe that may be, but**

10 **I'm not sure, but I believe that may be the same**

11 **evidence that I suggested earlier because "promiscuous"**

12 **was certainly the term that was used inappropriately in**

13 **a document I described earlier, where we have gone back**

14 **and where the social worker and the manager who signed**

15 **it off are no longer employed by the county council.**

16 MS HILL: Thank you, Mr Minns. Those are all my questions

17 on that theme, chair. Is that an appropriate place to

18 break for lunch?

19 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. We will return at 2.00 pm.

20 (12.56 pm)

21 (The short adjournment)

22 (2.00 pm)

23 THE CHAIR: Good afternoon, everyone. Ms Hill, please

24 proceed.

25 MS HILL: Thank you, chair. A couple of points, please,

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<p>1 before I move to the next theme. Forgive me, but 2 I should, in fact, have adduced your fifth witness 3 statement from you in the earlier part of your evidence. 4 That is another short statement that deals with some 5 generic matters, so, chair, with your permission, 6 please, I formally adduce the totality of Mr Minns' 7 fifth statement at WCC000409. 8 Could I also ask you to deal with a point of detail, 9 Mr Minns, in your fourth witness statement. This is not 10 a memory test, but in that fourth witness statement, 11 which I don't propose to adduce, you have given some 12 specific evidence about CS-A1 and about a medical report 13 in relation to CS-A1. I think you wanted to give some 14 correction evidence about the date in that statement. 15 Is that right? 16 A. Yes, indeed. There was a -- I think it was an 17 educational psychology assessment of CS-A1 which we 18 incorrectly dated as 2015. The actual date is 2017. 19 I understand that the original error is in the document 20 itself, where it's incorrectly dated. 21 Q. Thank you. The other core participants can notice that, 22 I'm sure, for their records. 23 Can I ask you, please, now to look at a generic 24 document I should have perhaps taken you to before, and 25 that is the Warwickshire missing, exploited and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 trafficked children strategy at WCC000231_006-008. 2 I think, Mr Minns, this is an overarching strategy that 3 runs from 2017 to 2020. It includes a range of 4 issues -- missing children, exploited children and 5 trafficked children -- and has specific provision made 6 between pages _006 and _008 around some of the details 7 of child sexual exploitation. Is that right? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. It provides, broadly, some understanding of different 10 models of exploitation. I think we see that in the 11 table of blue and green; some information on page _007 12 about the national context; the identification of CSE as 13 a national threat in February 2017 and some further 14 statistics. Then, just over the page, please, Danny, at 15 page _008, some further information -- the panel might 16 want to scroll in a little bit on this page -- on the 17 bullet points in particular, further information here 18 about the Warwickshire context. Is that right? 19 A. Yes, that's right. 20 Q. The panel can see some figures within that 2016 report, 21 although we will bring them up to date. We can take 22 that down. Thank you, Danny. 23 Then, just one further point I should have perhaps 24 drawn out around the theme of empathy, and it will segue 25 into the risk assessment theme as well. Is this right,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>
<p>1 Mr Minns, that in your NWG child sexual exploitation 2 assessment tool, there is a standard part of the tool 3 that records the wishes of the child? 4 A. Yes, there is. 5 Q. We can see, and I think just perhaps by way of 6 illustration, having heard quite a bit this morning 7 about CS-A1, if we look, please, at just two examples 8 here, can I ask, please, to have brought up 9 from May 2019 WCC000337_011. You will see the box that 10 is the child/young person's views. If we scroll in on 11 box 6, please, we can see that this records what CS-A1 12 was telling her social workers; is that right? 13 A. Yes, it is. 14 Q. We can see -- we don't need to bring it up -- there are 15 similar documents, there is another one, I think, for 16 the note at WCC000349_010-011. 17 Is that routinely completed with a narrative of what 18 the children are saying, or the young people are saying, 19 to the people completing the assessment? 20 A. Yes, it is. 21 Q. I turn now to that wider theme of risk assessment and 22 protection from harm. You have given a lot of evidence 23 in your written statements about this. But just in 24 terms of the headlines, can I bring up, please, 25 WCC000236_008, paragraphs 47 to 65, but perhaps you can</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 just scan through it, Mr Minns, and just help the panel, 2 first of all, with the "one meeting, one plan" approach 3 that you explain in these paragraphs? 4 A. Yes, of course. We received a considerable amount of 5 feedback from children and young people, from families 6 and from professionals that there are too many meetings, 7 they are asked to explain things too many times and, 8 from a professional perspective, that they are often 9 repeating things that were in other meetings. 10 The intention of the "one plan" approach is to embed 11 CSE work within other processes that are involved for 12 the child, so that we only have one process. So, for 13 example, if a child is subject to a child protection 14 plan, the child protection meetings will include the CSE 15 elements and the CSE evidence, and that's to ensure that 16 the teams working with the children work closer together 17 than I think they may well have done under the previous 18 processes. 19 What we don't have is a kind of -- a MASCE meeting, 20 a multi-agency sexual exploitation meeting, that 21 considers multiple children and has a list, and I've 22 seen evidence this week where people have talked about 23 people dropping on, dropping off lists, et cetera. We 24 don't do that. Each child has their own meeting. 25 There are occasions, regular occasions, when we have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 what is described as a complex strategy meeting, but 2 that is about bringing together the children whose cases 3 appear to be related so that we can gather all of 4 the evidence around that particular group or 5 a particular network. 6 Q. Can you scroll in, please, Danny, to paragraph 51. Just 7 help us, Mr Minns, with how the Warwickshire approach is 8 slightly different to other authorities? 9 A. I'm just seeing what this section says. 10 Q. I think you're referring back, please, to the "one 11 meeting, one plan" approach, but I may be wrong? 12 A. Yes, I am. So this is exactly what I just described, 13 really. It is about the fact that this is a group that 14 will discuss all the issues -- sorry, a meeting that 15 will discuss all of the issues for the child, rather 16 than having a series of child protection meetings, for 17 example, and also having a single meeting that discusses 18 a group of children with regard to CSE. 19 Q. Bring up now paragraph 81, which straddles internal 20 pages 30 to 31 of this document, Danny. Do you see 21 there, Mr Minns, that you have set out there a series of 22 initiatives that you wish to highlight by way of good 23 practice that I think were focused on also in your 24 counsel's opening, you have talked about training for 25 taxi drivers, training for hotel staff, theatre events</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 to raise awareness, ABE training, supporting victims in 2 giving evidence. The chair and panel can read that. Is 3 there anything else you would like to draw out from 4 those paragraphs, in particular focusing on risk 5 assessment? 6 A. Not in particular focusing on risk assessment, except 7 that some of this work specifically arose from incidents 8 where a risk assessment had been produced, in effect, 9 for a single child, but, actually, there had been, for 10 example, in this case, a hotel or a particular venue 11 that was identified, and that was the source or the 12 spark, if you like, for that piece of work. 13 Q. Thank you. Can I bring up your next statement that's 14 relevant to these issues, WCC000363_010. You talk here, 15 Mr Minns, about the tiered meeting screening process. 16 Just explain very briefly, I think the process here is 17 around completion of the NWG assessment tool, and it 18 then being sent into the child exploitation and missing 19 children team for overview and consideration of 20 allocation to a support worker. Have I broadly 21 summarised the system correctly? 22 A. You have, yes. So the -- sorry, I've lost my words 23 slightly. So we were very concerned that the screening 24 tool that we used previously was exactly that, it was 25 a screening tool, and, effectively, you were either</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>
<p>1 almost CSE or you weren't, or you were high risk, medium 2 risk and low risk. Actually, this is more about an 3 assessment of your need holistically, and I think it 4 probably broadly reflects the approach that was 5 highlighted on Day 2 by some of the participants talking 6 about the need for an integrated review or assessment of 7 children. 8 Q. We heard -- sorry, carry on, Mr Minns. 9 A. I think I made a note somewhere of that quote, but 10 I don't know what I've done with it. I think it was 11 Dr Hackett[sic] who talked about that. 12 Q. I think there may have been evidence -- well, there was 13 evidence, also, that you may have been following about 14 the debate between risk and harm? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. Do you want to comment on that approach that was 17 discussed? I think Dr Hallett and Dr Beckett. 18 A. Hallett, sorry. 19 Q. You may have merged them into one, but they both talked 20 about the difference between risk and harm? 21 A. Yes. I think that I would support their points. 22 I think there are -- I have one small caveat, I suppose. 23 I think, actually, any child who has been exploited has 24 suffered harm, and there should be no doubt about that, 25 and that will be significant harm. So I think, quite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 rightly, to start talking about risk at that point -- 2 and I appreciate we still do -- doesn't make sense, if 3 you like. 4 My only one point is, there would still be children 5 who are at risk of CSE who have not yet suffered harm, 6 and I think the phrase "heightened risk" was used, which 7 I think is a really useful term. 8 Q. You set out on the next page of this statement -- if 9 I can bring up WCC000363_011. You have moved away, as 10 a county, from the use of localised developed risk 11 assessments to using the NWG tool. You routinely use 12 chronologies, I think, as part of that risk assessment 13 process. Is there anything else you would like to say 14 about the use of this assessment model? 15 A. I suppose just to reiterate what I said earlier, that we 16 were very -- we were already looking for something that 17 did that -- this kind of approach, that took this 18 approach, when we approached Coventry University. 19 I think it was helpful that they were also approached by 20 the CSE Centre of Expertise at the time, and that gave 21 us the opportunity to be a pilot for this particular 22 tool, and I know it has been evaluated and has been 23 considered to be positive. 24 Q. You go on in the witness statement, at 58 through to 63, 25 so pages _011 and _012 side by side, please, to talk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 about the extension of the remit of the team to include 2 criminal exploitation. Can you provide some comment on 3 that and whether or not that has led to any issues about 4 the focus on CSE, so the sexual exploitation element, 5 being diminished? 6 A. First of all, I would say that, to answer your last 7 question first, in a way, it is something that we have 8 been incredibly conscious of throughout this process. 9 Certainly some of our practitioners, some of our 10 subgroups, early on were very conscious of the risk of 11 that. 12 I don't think that is the case. I think it has been 13 helpful. It's also been really helpful that we have 14 been able to engage the expertise of our youth justice 15 team, who have been involved also with criminal 16 exploitation. 17 The reality is that, for us, there is, I think, an 18 alarming overlap in cases nationally, not just in 19 Warwickshire, between CSE and broader criminal 20 exploitation. You have already heard evidence, and 21 you've seen in our statements evidence, for example, of 22 drug use, drug involvement and the use of drugs to groom 23 for CSE. I think having an opportunity to combine these 24 pieces of work but make sure that we don't lose the 25 explicit focus on CSE within that is really helpful.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 Q. What is the change in recording around that? You 2 mentioned recording issues. Do you want to help us with 3 that? 4 A. Yes. There is a recording issue that we didn't have, at 5 this time, a separate recording system, so effectively 6 all cases, whether CSE or CE, were recorded the same, 7 just in terms of producing data and statistics, which 8 obviously wasn't helpful at the time. 9 Q. Just briefly, you have set out in your witness statement 10 at 137, so that's WCC000363_023, evidence about your 11 transition of young people into adult projects, which 12 I think has been highlighted, has it not, by the NWG? 13 A. It has, yes. 14 Q. Forgive me, in response to that, I think. Do you want 15 to tell us a little bit about that? 16 A. Yes, absolutely. Transition to adulthood has been 17 a concern for me, and you will understand that, as 18 a Director of Adult Social Services as well, and someone 19 who was new to adult Social Services in 2017 entirely. 20 I was deeply concerned that, actually, victims of 21 CSE and actually exploitation, wider criminal 22 exploitation too, would not meet, very likely, the 23 criteria for support from adult social care under the 24 Care Act, and, therefore, there is a risk that, as soon 25 as they turn 18, they are lost to the system.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>
<p>1 I was absolutely delighted when our team came 2 forward with the proposal that we recruit to 3 a transition post to support these young people, and we 4 were absolutely happy to support that, to put funding in 5 place, and that practitioner started in January of this 6 year. 7 Q. Just putting that document to one side then, please, and 8 focusing on some examples of the risk assessment and 9 protection from harm, you have obviously, I think, 10 followed the evidence from CS-A2 very closely, and you 11 are aware of the findings of the audit in that case. 12 I think, in terms of the council's position, is this 13 right, that you do accept, I think, that the council was 14 too slow to identify that CS-A1 was at risk of child 15 sexual exploitation, and that, during the period in 16 question, she had too many short-term placements. Is 17 that broadly where the council accepts there were issues 18 in her case? 19 A. Yes, it is. 20 Q. Is it right that, since you have looked at this case, 21 you have explained, I think, through your evidence that 22 there have been changes made to the risk assessment 23 process. I hope just to draw out some of them. You 24 have changed your risk assessment pro forma, you have 25 strengthened your quality assurance practices, I think,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 and there are various other ways in which things have 2 been done slightly differently, I think. Certainly you 3 have said that you recognise the difficulties or the 4 importance of stable placements. I'm not sure what work 5 has been done around that. But is there anything else 6 that you would like to say around the risk assessment 7 issues in CS-A1's case? 8 A. Absolutely I would. The whole system, I suppose, has 9 changed, is the simplest way to say this. So when CS-A1 10 was placed in our care, she was assessed by a CSE 11 practitioner -- I believe it's the manager of the team 12 at the time -- who made a decision that she didn't meet 13 the criteria. 14 My interpretation of that is that that decision was 15 that actually she didn't meet the criteria for 16 allocation to the team, and I think that's how the 17 screening tool was used at that time. She did recommend 18 some work, and one of the difficulties with the 19 complexities of this case is that some of that work that 20 took place around CSE actually, in June/July 2016, is 21 not evidenced in lots of ways on the case file, because 22 of the way that CSE was seen as a separate process and 23 a separate risk, and I think the issue is picked up very 24 well in the multi-agency audit about the fact that quite 25 a lot of this happened by email and by phone call,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 because the CSE element was not embedded in the core 2 assessment process that was going on, which focused on 3 the early trauma [Redacted] at that point. 4 If CS-A1 had come to our attention or been referred 5 to us at a later point, so beyond 2018, and I do have to 6 say that we are embedding this process over time and 7 this tool over time, so it's not perfect even now, but 8 if that had been the case, that she'd come to our 9 attention in 2018, we would have expected that this tool 10 would have been completed, that CSE practitioners, 11 social workers, health colleagues, school, et cetera, 12 would have been involved in those meetings, as would the 13 parents and other carers. 14 Actually, there would have been a much more 15 joined-up process. 16 Q. Sorry to interject, can I just clarify, we looked at the 17 fact that there were some NWG forms completed, some NWG 18 assessment forms completed, for CS-A1. When you're 19 saying that this assessment would have been done 20 differently, can you help us understand how? 21 A. Yes, this would have been done -- so much later -- 22 sorry, it would have been done much earlier. So in 23 CS-A1's case, the original screening was done at a time 24 when we didn't have this tool. 25 Q. I see.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 A. It is in -- I think it is in 2018 where she takes part 2 in a meeting that uses this tool. 3 Q. I think the ones I took you were 2019, but you're saying 4 that -- you're offering this NWG assessment tool as the 5 one that is the one you commend, but you're just saying 6 it wasn't in place at the 2016/2017 point? 7 A. No, it wasn't, and nor was the "one meeting, one plan" 8 approach in place at that time, which would have brought 9 parents and other professionals together. 10 Q. The issue of repeated placements that was described by 11 CS-A2, is there a wider problem around a shortage of 12 foster carers? 13 A. There is a significant national problem around the 14 shortage of foster carers and about the shortage of 15 residential placements. Even within the last two weeks, 16 I have been in meetings with the Department for 17 Education and the Home Office in which directors of 18 children's services from across the country have been 19 flagging this up as a continued issue. 20 There is definitely a shortage, but I think I would 21 go further than that, because one of the challenges 22 about that shortage is -- and there are other 23 implications, but one of them is that, actually, 24 providers come to be able to pick and choose, and 25 children who are seen as particularly vulnerable,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>
<p>1 particularly challenging, by providers are not the ones 2 that they prefer. 3 Of course there are exceptions to this, and there 4 are very specific providers, but, on the whole, it is 5 much harder specifically to find placements for 6 teenagers and for -- to find placements for children 7 with disabilities and for children with complex 8 behaviour issues, whatever the cause of those may be. 9 Q. One of the issues that was raised in CS-A2's evidence 10 was an apparent rotation of social workers, the turnover 11 of staff or different people. Are there any wider 12 issues around that, Mr Minns? 13 A. I think the biggest issue on a broad perspective, and 14 leaving aside the particular case for a second, is that 15 CSE work is about the most harrowing work that social 16 workers carry out. They find it incredibly difficult, 17 incredibly challenging, hearing children's stories. 18 They do sometimes feel a sense of frustration, and it is 19 not uncommon for social workers with this particular -- 20 working in this particular area to seek alternative 21 posts in other areas of social work. At least two or 22 three of the social workers that worked with CS-A1 23 actually moved to other posts within the council doing 24 a different kind of work. 25 Q. On the topics list, Mr Minns, there were some other</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>	<p>1 children whose cases you were asked to look at. I don't 2 propose to ask you any other questions about CS-A19. 3 But of the other cases that you were asked to look at, 4 are there any particular themes around risk assessment 5 that you have now identified, having reviewed those 6 children's cases? 7 A. I have. One of the things that I suppose -- I'm sure it 8 will come up under a different theme. One of 9 the advantages of the current system that we use in 10 terms of risk assessment is that it does mean that every 11 meeting is a multi-agency meeting. So if I were to take 12 you back, for example, to CS-A216, who we talked about 13 earlier, CS-A216 had a disability. I'm not sure we 14 recognised that it was a disability in that sense, but 15 she clearly did. 16 In her meetings, because it was a multi-agency, 17 multi-focused meeting, the specialist education provider 18 was involved throughout, and was able to give specific 19 advice around attachment issues and ASD, because they 20 are a specialist in that area. So actually having 21 a multi-agency approach and a multifaceted approach is, 22 I think, really positive and helpful. 23 Q. Could you look at CS-A300, that case. 24 A. Yes, indeed. 25 Q. CS-A300, the panel will be aware from the timeline</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

1 prepared, is a looked-after child, I think, who had
 2 Asperger's. The evidence suggests he had a high number
 3 of missing episodes and had been groomed and sexually
 4 exploited by adult males. Did you have any concerns
 5 about the fact that it doesn't appear from the paperwork
 6 that a strategy meeting did take place in March
 7 and April 2019, when it seemed that there was evidence
 8 of him being groomed? Did you have any concerns about
 9 an apparent delay there?
 10 **A. Yes. There were concerns about CS-A300 earlier than**
 11 **that and work had been ongoing. Exploitation --**
 12 Q. For the chair and panel, they have a timeline that
 13 reports events between March 2017 and June 2018.
 14 I think, in June, that's when the strategy meeting did
 15 take place, the multi-agency strategy meeting, but there
 16 is a concern from the paperwork that there was evidence
 17 before then, for example, in February 2018, he had been
 18 picked up from the foster carers by an older man in
 19 a car and, in October 2017, it was reported that he was
 20 going to meet a man who he'd known from an earlier
 21 foster placement and there were concerns that this
 22 associate influenced and controlled him.
 23 So was there any concern there about a delay in
 24 having a proper multiagency strategy meeting?
 25 **A. A strategy meeting was held in October '17, at that**

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1 (A short break)
 2 (2.40 pm)
 3 THE CHAIR: Ms Hill?
 4 MS HILL: Chair, a matter has arisen in some of the evidence
 5 of Mr Minns on which I invite you to make a provisional
 6 restriction order. It relates to the evidence he gave
 7 at page 96, line 10 of the draft transcript where he
 8 said that the focus of the risk assessment process in
 9 CS-A1's case had been about something other than CSE.
 10 Could I invite you to make a provisional restriction
 11 order in relation to the other issues he referred to.
 12 THE CHAIR: Yes, I will do that.
 13 MS HILL: Thank you. Mr Minns, we can continue, I think.
 14 I would like to ask you some questions about a different
 15 topic, about looked-after children. You have given
 16 quite a bit of evidence about this in your witness
 17 statement. Can I bring up WCC000236_013, please. You
 18 have set out, at paragraphs 77 through to 90, that if
 19 other local authorities' children go missing whilst
 20 placed in Warwickshire, Warwickshire does conduct RHIs
 21 for those children; is that right?
 22 **A. That is right, yes.**
 23 Q. Is there anything else in particular about your RHI
 24 process or about the process of children being placed by
 25 Warwickshire outside your area that you would like to

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1 **time, and a CSE tool was completed in January 2018, or**
 2 **started to be completed in January 2018, and a CSE**
 3 **worker was assigned to the case at that point.**
 4 **CS-A300 did not want to engage with them -- with**
 5 **that worker, but they remained allocated and did attempt**
 6 **contact at various times.**
 7 **He was very specific that he would not talk to his**
 8 **allocated worker about that particular individual, and**
 9 **that remained the case throughout.**
 10 Q. Do you have any comments on the risk assessment in the
 11 case of CS-A151? Did you look at that case, Mr Minns?
 12 **A. I did look at that case, but, as I have said previously,**
 13 **CS-A151 was not a Warwickshire child, so, while we**
 14 **supported the neighbouring local authority in terms of**
 15 **(inaudible), we didn't conduct the risk assessment in**
 16 **that case.**
 17 Q. I didn't ask you any questions about CS-A19. Was there
 18 anything you wanted to draw to our attention about that
 19 child, in terms of risk assessment?
 20 **A. No, I don't think so at the moment, thank you.**
 21 MS HILL: Can we stop the feed temporarily, chair? Please
 22 can we just take a short break? I think there's been an
 23 issue around the restriction order, I'm sorry.
 24 THE CHAIR: Yes, we can do that.
 25 (2.27 pm)

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1 draw to the panel's attention?
 2 **A. No, I don't think so at this stage. I think the only**
 3 **thing I would say about Return Home Interviews is that**
 4 **we do consider they are incredibly important. They**
 5 **sometimes don't feel incredibly important to those**
 6 **participating in them, or sometimes to others. But the**
 7 **reality is that they are a constant reminder to young**
 8 **people that we are concerned about them, that we do want**
 9 **to know where they have been, that we will stick with**
 10 **them, and that is a really constant factor throughout in**
 11 **some cases with some children.**
 12 Q. Can I ask you this, Mr Minns: what reporting procedures
 13 are in place to inform receiving authorities or
 14 non-Warwickshire Police in circumstances where an
 15 out-of-county placement child is recorded as missing?
 16 I think that's a child who is from Warwickshire but is
 17 placed out of the county. Can you help us with that?
 18 **A. So first of all, I would say we would notify any**
 19 **provider -- where we place out of county, we will notify**
 20 **the local authority that we are placing there. My**
 21 **understanding of the procedure is that the provider will**
 22 **notify the local police if a child goes missing. But**
 23 **I would have to confirm that. Yes, that is my**
 24 **understanding.**
 25 Q. Mr Minns, forgive me, in fairness to you, that's an

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1 additional question that just features generally on the
 2 topics list but that specific question hadn't been put
 3 on the topics list, so if you do wish to address that in
 4 writing further, you can?
 5 **A. Thank you. That would be helpful.**
 6 Q. You were asked on the topics list to explain how the
 7 risk of CSE in the allocation of a placement for
 8 a looked-after child is approached in relation to risks
 9 within the placement, risks in that geographical area or
 10 potential access to new networks. Can you help us with
 11 how that risk is considered when selecting a placement
 12 for a looked-after child?
 13 **A. Yes. All placements are considered in terms of their
 14 risk for a range of factors, including CSE, and they are
 15 considered both by the local authority but also,
 16 particularly in the case of residential providers, the
 17 provider also has a duty to consider the risks
 18 available. It is one of the reasons why sometimes it is
 19 particularly difficult to place children, because,
 20 actually, the provider will identify that that child may
 21 be a risk to others in the placement or that other
 22 children in the placement may be a risk to them.**
 23 Q. Can I ask to bring up, please, WCC000409_002,
 24 paragraph 5, please, just to complete this part of
 25 the evidence, Mr Minns. This is some statistics that

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1 person appeared to have been groomed and abused while
 2 a looked-after child; is that right?
 3 **A. Yes, it is. This is a case of a young person who was
 4 placed with us in 2016 who, as you said, has
 5 a diagnosis. He became involved with an individual and
 6 the local authority became concerned about that
 7 involvement. This was someone who was considerably
 8 older than him, and there were considerable exchanges,
 9 I think it's fair to say, between the local authority
 10 and the individual and between us and CS-A300 about
 11 whether this was an adult who posed risk to this
 12 particular child. There was a very strong
 13 representation from the individual that they had become
 14 friends through particular circumstances, and, actually,
 15 that he was someone who wanted to care for, and, in
 16 fact, at one point offered to provide a placement for,
 17 CS-A300, although that was blocked by the local
 18 authority at that point. I think it would have fallen
 19 apart anyway.**
 20 **This is the individual that I pointed out that the
 21 CSE worker was allocated to work with him during that
 22 period, and that was a constant challenge, was around
 23 that individual, and that there was a refusal on the
 24 part of CS-A300 to consider that that was anyone other
 25 than a friend, and he simply wouldn't discuss him in any**

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1 you provided the chair and panel with about the number
 2 of children who have been placed out of county between
 3 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2020. It is internal
 4 paragraph 5. You have confirmed here that there were 49
 5 children placed out of county where a CSE concern was
 6 noted at some stage in their contact with the council.
 7 Is that right?
 8 **A. That is right, yes, between 1 April 2019 and
 9 31 March 2020.**
 10 Q. Sorry, I'm not sure if I got the dates wrong. Forgive
 11 me if I did. Your answer to the last question about how
 12 that risk is assessed, does that approach vary when
 13 assessing foster placements, residential placements and
 14 educational placements, or is it the same?
 15 **A. It would be the same.**
 16 Q. Can I ask you, then, just in relation to one case that's
 17 listed on the topics list, the case of CS-A300, did you
 18 have a chance to look back over that case and form
 19 a view from the fact that this child was a looked-after
 20 child, this was a child who was a young person,
 21 a suggestion of evidence of a disability, evidence of
 22 exploitation by a group of males. Did you have a chance
 23 to have a look at that case?
 24 **A. Yes, I did.**
 25 Q. Do you want to offer any comment on it? The young

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1 **contacts that we had.**
 2 **You are absolutely right to say that in 2016 --**
 3 **sorry, in June 2018, there was a disclosure that,**
 4 **previously -- by CS-A300 that, previously, that**
 5 **individual had been responsible for him being sexually**
 6 **abused.**
 7 Q. That young person was listed on the topics list also in
 8 relation to him being a male victim and also having
 9 a disability. Through those two themes, is there
 10 anything further you'd like to add?
 11 **A. Well, I think -- yes. The first thing I would like to**
 12 **add is, as referred to in our opening statement, we are**
 13 **clear that some young people who have a disability are**
 14 **not necessarily recorded as having a disability, and**
 15 **CS-A300 is an example of this.**
 16 Q. Just pausing there, I think what you're describing,
 17 Mr Minns, is a distinction between a young child being
 18 recorded as having a particular mental condition and
 19 disability under the Equality Act as defined. I think
 20 that's what you are talking about, is it?
 21 **A. That is exactly right. So throughout the assessment**
 22 **papers that I have reviewed and throughout the files,**
 23 **CS-A300 is referred to as not having a disability, but**
 24 **as having Asperger's and ADHD, which under the**
 25 **Equalities Act we would consider is a disability.**

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<p>1 I do believe that the assessment papers show that 2 those needs are taken into account in terms of an 3 understanding of what that means. There are a number of 4 things where behaviours or relationships are described 5 as, "This may be because of his ADHD or because of his 6 Asperger's", and it is probably worth noting, quite 7 unusually, for a number of circumstances, that CS-A300 8 was working with a consultant psychiatrist from CAMHS 9 throughout this period who was supporting around some of 10 those issues.</p> <p>11 Q. I won't bring them up, Mr Minns, but can I just record 12 that you have given evidence about male victims 13 generally in your first witness statement at WCC000236 14 at paragraphs 102 to 114; your further statement, 15 WCC000363, at paragraphs 110 to 114; and you have 16 provided the chair and panel with this document -- can 17 I bring this up briefly, please, WCC000230. I think 18 that's the NPCC toolkit for professionals provided by 19 the NPCC jointly with Victim Support and the 20 Children's Society. It is a specific toolkit for boys 21 and young men at risk of CSE; is that right?</p> <p>22 A. That's right.</p> <p>23 Q. You have also provided information about the campaign, 24 I think the "Something's Not Right" campaign, within 25 Warwickshire. Can you tell us just a little bit about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 that, please?</p> <p>2 A. Yes. So the "Something's Not Right" campaign is 3 a multi-agency approach highlighting the risks of CSE. 4 It has been running for a number of years. It's now 5 hosted -- essentially, it's hosted by the police, but it 6 is a joint initiative between the police, the county 7 council and Barnardo's, the Office of the Police and 8 Crime Commissioner are involved in the funding for it. 9 It flags up a whole range of issues. It seeks to make 10 young people aware of the risks and the nature of CSE. 11 It has had specific programmes around boys. The 12 Crashing workshop, which I think I've referred to 13 previously, which is a theatre workshop that was 14 produced by professionals across a range of schools and 15 other providers had a real focus -- I was fortunate 16 enough to introduce those workshops on the particular 17 day they took place, and they were very powerful in 18 terms of sending out messages about the risks of 19 exploitation to boys and young men.</p> <p>20 Q. I won't bring it up, you have already talked about the 21 disability issue in some detail, but, for completeness, 22 can I note, please, in your earlier evidence at 23 WCC000236, internal paragraphs 115 to 117, you provided 24 some evidence about that in relation to the children 25 with disabilities team, and you provided some data at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>
<p>1 WCC000225 around the children or the numbers of children 2 subject to a MACE meeting who were listed as having 3 a disability. I think what you are saying is that the 4 newer approach you have to that should lead to greater 5 categorisation of children in that way; is that right?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, absolutely. I would argue that using that broader 7 definition, certainly a number of the children that are 8 identified there as not having a disability would have 9 been recorded as having a disability.</p> <p>10 Q. I think under the heading "Audit review and performance 11 improvement", we have been provided with a thematic 12 review of February this year, WSP000229. Is there 13 anything in particular about that that you would like to 14 draw to our attention?</p> <p>15 A. I don't have it in front of me. For some reason, it's 16 disappeared from my file. Only that I think there are 17 some challenges around the dates of audits that were 18 included in that. I think it would have been helpful to 19 have had cases more recently -- sorry, more recent that 20 were included in that audit. Because I think it 21 reflects in some places the practice of pre April 2018 22 when we introduced the new model and the new assessment.</p> <p>23 On a much more positive note, I would highlight, 24 I think, the response from schools particularly and 25 other professionals around their awareness of CSE,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>	<p>1 figures in the 90-plus per cent awareness, I think 2 93/94, off the top of my head, per cent awareness of 3 CSE, where to go, what the policies were and who to 4 contact in school or elsewhere if they had a doubt.</p> <p>5 Q. If we just go briefly, please -- my final question for 6 you -- to internal page 17, I think there were some key 7 findings made under three broad headings. Key findings 8 made on governance, policies and procedures; on the 9 lived experience; on partnership and information 10 sharing. Then one can see -- forgive me, it is internal 11 page 20 -- the outcome was a multi-agency action plan 12 with particular recommendations and actions. Is that 13 right?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, that's right.</p> <p>15 MS HILL: Those are all my questions, Mr Minns. Thank you.</p> <p>16 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Hill. I have one or two 17 questions, and I will then ask my colleagues if they 18 wish to ask any questions.</p> <p>19 Questions from THE PANEL</p> <p>20 THE CHAIR: Regarding the training and awareness raising of 21 your children's social workers of child sexual 22 exploitation, have they all undertaken such awareness 23 raising or specific training?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, they all have training, and we do regular training. 25 Training is also broadly available for schools and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

1 others. We provide it free through our electronic
 2 training system.
 3 THE CHAIR: You referred to discussions, case discussions --
 4 I won't go into that -- in 2016/17, but at that time,
 5 would all of your social workers who attended any
 6 discussion of any child be able to recognise and raise
 7 the potential for CSE being present?
 8 **A. I'm not sure that it's a question that I can be**
 9 **absolutely secure about. Clearly, it covers a period**
 10 **before I took up my role. But I would have expected any**
 11 **social worker to understand the issues around CSE at**
 12 **that time, yes.**
 13 THE CHAIR: So in any case, discussions of any child, if
 14 there were potential indicators, they all should have
 15 been able to identify those?
 16 **A. I believe that they should have been able to identify**
 17 **them, yes. In view of the context of that time, in view**
 18 **of your own report in 2014, other reports in 2015/2016,**
 19 **I think there was a heightened awareness amongst our**
 20 **workforce and other workforces around those issues.**
 21 THE CHAIR: I want to go on to your other point, or the
 22 points that were raised about frequent changes of social
 23 worker. Do you have a caseload management system for
 24 child protection social workers?
 25 **A. Yes, we do.**

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1 past when we have operated on a broadly numerical
 2 system, so we had a caseload target for the number of
 3 children that any individual would have under their --
 4 number of cases that an individual social worker would
 5 hold. We have moved away from that number model over
 6 the past few years to focus very much on having
 7 a balance of complexity in terms of the children that an
 8 individual social worker would be dealing with.
 9 THE CHAIR: Can you give me any idea of the numbers?
 10 **A. In terms of caseload management? As of the beginning of**
 11 **this week, I believe we were averaging around 17 to 18**
 12 **cases per social worker. That's individual children.**
 13 **Some of those will be families with several -- each**
 14 **child is counted individually is what I am trying to**
 15 **say.**
 16 THE CHAIR: Yes, I understand that. Complexity. Of that 17
 17 or 18, how many would be complex cases?
 18 **A. I don't know if I know what the proportion would be for**
 19 **any individual, and it will vary depending on the type**
 20 **of complexity, the number of children in the family.**
 21 **Roughly speaking, we have about 2,000 open cases to**
 22 **children's social care at the moment. About one-sixth**
 23 **of those are child protection cases, and about -- we**
 24 **have about 800 children in our care.**
 25 **So looked-after children would sit within the**

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1 THE CHAIR: Can you very briefly explain how that is
 2 managed?
 3 **A. Not easily. I don't -- as you will understand, in my**
 4 **role, I don't have the operational management**
 5 **responsibilities. We do -- I'm not sure what is the**
 6 **best way to answer your question, really. Cases -- so**
 7 **we offer -- operate a multi-agency safeguarding hub.**
 8 **Cases are referred into the hub. They are then**
 9 **allocated to an initial assessment team. The initial**
 10 **assessment team will carry out strategy meetings and,**
 11 **where appropriate, they will then be allocated to**
 12 **children's teams in our localities. Operations managers**
 13 **would oversee the allocation process within those teams.**
 14 THE CHAIR: Thank you. I haven't properly explained this.
 15 In regard to your statements about the rotation of
 16 social workers, you seemed to refer to the potential
 17 stress that arises from working with intensity in child
 18 sexual exploitation cases. What I am trying to
 19 understand is whether you have in place a workload
 20 management system that intends to ensure that social
 21 workers are not put in that position; in other words,
 22 they have a notional -- a balance between numbers and
 23 intensity and demand in terms of work -- the content of
 24 the work required.
 25 **A. Yes, so absolutely. There have been times during the**

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1 **looked-after team, once they were a certain age. So**
 2 **that's roughly the balance, if you like, in terms of**
 3 **the proportions.**
 4 THE CHAIR: Again, I was trying to relate it to the
 5 individual pressures on social workers that might cause
 6 them, as you described, to opt into other areas and
 7 therefore have a high turnover, when we all know
 8 continuity of contact is hugely important to individual
 9 children.
 10 **A. Yes. So, as I said, it will vary from an individual to**
 11 **an individual. Clearly, when operations managers make**
 12 **the decisions around allocation, they are aware of**
 13 **the cases that individuals are currently holding and**
 14 **what level of complexity there is for each of them, and**
 15 **they make those decisions based on that basis, so they**
 16 **will allocate where they believe that an individual does**
 17 **have the capacity to take on that case.**
 18 THE CHAIR: So you would be satisfied that individual
 19 workloads do not overburden individual social workers
 20 with having too many, for example, of child sexual
 21 exploitation or sexual abuse?
 22 **A. It is certainly something we monitor constantly and our**
 23 **feedback is that caseloads are manageable. They do**
 24 **vary, as I said. There can be particular pressures in**
 25 **particular geographical areas at particular times.**

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1 A large number of complex cases coming in can make
2 a difference at a particular time. But when -- and of
3 course recruitment issues can as well. Turnover of
4 social workers nationally is around 15 per cent every
5 year. That's similar in Warwickshire. We have a large
6 number that leave and don't come in. So there are all
7 those complexities. But overall, on a kind of average
8 position, I would argue that caseloads are manageable.

9 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Ms Sharpling?
10 MS SHARPLING: Thank you, chair. Just one question from me,
11 if I may, Mr Minns.

12 We have heard a lot from core participants and from
13 witnesses that there is a gap between the policy intent
14 of the institution, which may be an appropriate one, and
15 the actual delivery of the service by front-line
16 practitioners, which varies widely. I'm concerned to
17 learn how these matters are implemented. When
18 implementing change, how does that happen and how do you
19 test for yourself whether they have been successful or
20 they are making progress in the area where they have
21 been implemented?

22 **A. First of all, I would absolutely accept that that is the**
23 **case, that there is a gap. I think we saw evidence of**
24 **that -- sorry, we saw examples of that in my evidence**
25 **earlier around victim-blaming language, where I think**

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1 tools, including our case management system, to make
2 sure that they accord with that approach.

3 So, for example, we have a new child protection
4 assessment that is based on that approach so that the
5 tools people are working with, the training they are
6 receiving, the input they are getting from their
7 managers, is exactly the same.

8 I believe we have really strong buy-in, but, again,
9 I don't believe that everybody behaves restoratively in
10 every meeting that they have at this time, but that is
11 what we are continuing to work towards.

12 MS SHARPLING: Have you come across examples of what might
13 be called cultural resistance to change?

14 **A. Yes, certainly. I think this was in some ways easier**
15 **than other changes that might have taken place because**
16 **many of the practitioners who became involved in it**
17 **began to see that it was what they described as good**
18 **old-fashioned social work. So I think that has been**
19 **positive. There has been less cultural change. But,**
20 **undoubtedly, there have been individuals who don't want**
21 **to work in this way, who believe a case management**
22 **system -- a direct allocation case management system is**
23 **the right way to go. We have worked with those**
24 **individuals. As I have said, we have used champions, we**
25 **have tried to provide them with opportunities to ensure**

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1 our policies are absolutely right, but our practice
2 doesn't yet match those.

3 In terms of how we implement, if I could give you an
4 example, probably the biggest piece of work that we have
5 been doing over the last two or three years, in my time
6 in this post, is around the development of a restorative
7 approach, so a strength-based approach, to social work.
8 The way that we have implemented that is, we have
9 started with briefing sessions, buy-in sessions or
10 information sessions for senior managers. We have
11 spread that around to other managers in the organisation
12 to make sure we have the management buy-in. We have
13 then delivered face-to-face training. In this case, it
14 was a three-day training slot for each social worker or
15 each member of staff, actually, not just social workers,
16 so family support workers, youth workers and others,
17 around that particular practice.

18 We focus team meetings on it, we have briefings. We
19 talk about it at our conference -- our conference, staff
20 conference, revisits it. We have kind of expert
21 practitioners who people can talk to about this
22 particular approach.

23 So we try to make sure that there are as many
24 different options as are possible. We have written
25 policies. We have adjusted all of our policies and our

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1 that they see the benefits of the approach, and
2 particularly that it is an approach that's focused on
3 the wishes/needs of children and young people and their
4 families, which is what they came into this profession
5 for.

6 MS SHARPLING: I see. 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. There are no further
12 questions, Mr Minns.

13 **A. Thank you.**
14 **(The witness withdrew)**

15 MS HILL: Chair, it would be an appropriate point to take
16 our mid-afternoon break before the next witness.
17 Perhaps we can rise for 15 minutes?
18 THE CHAIR: Yes. We will return at 3.20 pm. thank you.
19 MS HILL: Thank you.
20 (3.06 pm)
21 (A short break)
22 (3.20 pm)
23 THE CHAIR: Ms Hill?
24 MS HILL: Detective Superintendent Peter Hill is our next
25 witness.

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1 MR PETER HILL (affirmed)
 2 Examination by MS HILL
 3 MS HILL: You are Detective Superintendent Peter Hill from
 4 Warwickshire Police; is that right?
 5 **A. That's correct.**
 6 Q. You have provided the inquiry with a series of
 7 statements, and I'd like to formally adduce, please, the
 8 following statements from you: first of all, the first
 9 statement you provided the inquiry, which is WSP000176;
 10 WSP000206; there are two further statements that I may
 11 or may not need to adduce in full, but I'll give the
 12 reference now, WSP000205 and WSP000232. But it may not
 13 be necessary to take you to those statements. Are those
 14 statements true, to the best of your knowledge and
 15 belief?
 16 **A. Yes, they are.**
 17 Q. Chair, with your permission, I'd like to formally adduce
 18 certainly the first two of those statements in full,
 19 please. Thank you.
 20 Detective Superintendent Hill, if you can't see or
 21 hear me or you can't follow the questions, please let me
 22 know, and please be mindful of the restriction orders
 23 that you know are in place around a series of children
 24 in particular that you have looked at the cases of. Is
 25 that all right?

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1 **in 2015, when we were part of an alliance with**
 2 **Warwickshire and West Mercia. At that point, the CSE**
 3 **team was there to cover the east of the region which, to**
 4 **the best of my knowledge, included parts of**
 5 **Worcestershire and consisted of a detective sergeant,**
 6 **three detective constables and a CSE coordinator.**
 7 **Warwickshire Police, around that time, also utilised**
 8 **underspend to temporarily fund some additional posts**
 9 **which consisted of a detective sergeant, three detective**
 10 **constables, four police staff investigators, an analyst**
 11 **and a researcher. And in 2018, at the height of**
 12 **austerity, the team consisted of three detective**
 13 **sergeants, one strategic post, two part time, three**
 14 **detective constables, three police staff investigators,**
 15 **one CSE coordinator, one missing persons coordinator and**
 16 **two analysts.**
 17 **As we stand at this point in time, so to 2020,**
 18 **in June 2020 we launched a child abuse and trafficking**
 19 **and exploitation team. That includes four detective**
 20 **sergeants, 12 detective constables, albeit there's only**
 21 **nine in post at the moment, two police staff**
 22 **investigators, one analyst, one CE coordinator, one**
 23 **missing persons coordinator/supervisor, three missing**
 24 **persons practitioners and a missing support officer.**
 25 Q. One of the issues that I'd like to explore with you

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1 **A. Yes, thank you.**
 2 Q. Is it all right if I call you Mr Hill rather than giving
 3 you your rank every time?
 4 **A. That's fine.**
 5 Q. Mr Hill, can you first of all please tell us a little
 6 bit about your professional background?
 7 **A. Yes, I joined the police in 1994. I moved into CID in**
 8 **1999 and, since 1999, I've had a range of roles. In**
 9 **2007, I became a major crime and homicide SIO, so from**
 10 **2007 until 2018 I performed that role. In July/August**
 11 **time in 2018, I moved into the world of vulnerability**
 12 **and safeguarding. I have been a College of Policing**
 13 **accredited senior investigative officer since 2009.**
 14 **I have completed a College of Policing public protection**
 15 **leaders course, and I'm the head of vulnerability and**
 16 **safeguarding in Warwickshire.**
 17 Q. You should have a topics list, Mr Hill, on which
 18 a series of questions are laid out by reference to
 19 particular themes. Can I ask you, first of all,
 20 a little bit in general terms about the structure of
 21 the CSE team within Warwickshire Police?
 22 **A. Yes. Are you talking about in 2018 or are you talking**
 23 **about now?**
 24 Q. Can you give us both permutations, please?
 25 **A. Initially when the team was set up, the team was set up**

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1 before we get to our first theme is that, as I think you
 2 are aware, some questions have been asked about PIP2
 3 qualification. Can I just ask you to explain first of
 4 all to the chairman what that is?
 5 **A. PIP2 basically means initially you join the police as**
 6 **a probationer and spend your first two years as**
 7 **a probationer and you get signed off at the end of**
 8 **those two years. At the end of the two years, if you**
 9 **want to train to be a detective, you have to pass an**
 10 **initial law exam. The course is now currently called**
 11 **the ICDP programme. If you successfully pass the ICDP**
 12 **programme, you are known as a PIP2 investigator, which**
 13 **basically means you have satisfied the College of**
 14 **Policing that you're trained to investigate serious and**
 15 **complex crime, and within that -- so that would enable**
 16 **you to investigate a whole host of crimes. But there**
 17 **are some additional training courses that they could go**
 18 **on to do to further enhance their training, knowledge**
 19 **and understanding.**
 20 Q. I think you have been recently made aware of some
 21 statistics that suggest that only 13 of 1,035 officers
 22 in the force have PIP2. Is that something that you were
 23 aware of previously?
 24 **A. No, I don't think that information is correct. So, in**
 25 **effect, pretty much every single detective in the force,**

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<p>1 and there's over 100 detectives in the force, almost all 2 of those would have to complete the PIP2 accreditation. 3 I think you may be referring there to the number of PIP2 4 detectives in the CSE team rather than the organisation. 5 Q. I'm sorry, I put the question wrongly. I think that's 6 probably right. 7 A. Yes, that's correct. 8 Q. Can you reflect on whether, in your view, that number is 9 sufficient? 10 A. I think the problem with policing -- child exploitation, 11 child sexual abuse is quite rightly a priority, but in 12 policing there are a number of other priorities that we 13 have to make sure we can properly resource. We need to 14 make sure that we have got suitable road traffic cars so 15 they can respond to serious road traffic collisions, we 16 need to make sure there are staff available to deal with 17 other rape and serious sexual offences, we need to have 18 the ability to respond to any kind of firearms incidents 19 that are taking place; for example, should a terrorism 20 attack take place. It is always really difficult and, 21 in my experience of policing, it's always been really 22 challenging and, yes, we would always want more 23 resources, but all I could say is that we try to do the 24 best we can with the resources and funding that we have 25 available.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 Q. I'm going to move to our first topic, please, of problem 2 profiling, WSP000176_002 and scroll in, please, on 3 paragraphs 4 through to 19. Just to remind you of 4 the evidence that you have given here, Mr Hill, in 5 relation to profiling, can you pull out for the chair 6 and panel here the key themes around how the police 7 force engages in profiling for CSE? 8 A. Yes. So, again, as part of the alliance, as I have 9 covered in my statement, a large piece of work was 10 completed in 2014 in order that we could properly try to 11 understand the extent of child sexual exploitation 12 across Warwickshire and West Mercia, and that involved 13 a large piece of work with analysts and senior analysts 14 and across in West Mercia they did a number of CSE 15 panels with partners to try and capture a richer picture 16 of what was going on and, from a Warwickshire 17 perspective, we fed suitable information from partners 18 into that profile and that led to a profile being 19 completed. You then move on to, in August 2015, an 20 updated threat assessment was completed, and then, as 21 you already spoke about earlier on in the week, the 22 regional organised crime unit received some additional 23 funding to enable a CSE analyst and coordinator to come 24 into place. They then worked on producing a profile for 25 the region because it was recognised that those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>
<p>1 exploiting children and vulnerable people don't 2 recognise arbitrary lines in the map, and then, since 3 then, the ROCU have been responsible for completing the 4 quarterly threat assessment document. 5 Q. Can we look briefly at the child exploitation problem 6 profile for Warwickshire, WSP000208, please, Danny. 7 This document I think is the specific child exploitation 8 problem profile for the county; is that right? 9 A. Yes. So, again, through the Warwickshire safeguarding 10 board, the subgroup, it became clear to us that the 11 problem around child exploitation was changing. Again, 12 we were beginning to see child sexual exploitation 13 continuing to be a significant threat, but we noticed 14 that we were starting to see modern slavery and human 15 trafficking, exploitation around county lines, so what 16 we wanted to do, as a partnership, was truly understand 17 all the difficulties we had to face. So what we tried 18 to do is, from the broadest sources of information 19 possible, capture the essence of what was going on in 20 Warwickshire, and we did that by securing data from 21 children's services, from police systems, and engaging 22 with schools, et cetera, and this set out what the 23 findings of that research was. 24 Q. If we go to internal page 2, just to give the chair and 25 panel a broad overview of the contents of this quite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>	<p>1 long document, if we scroll in on the contents page, 2 does the problem profile deal with both child criminal 3 exploitation and child sexual exploitation separately, 4 but for each of those go through a series of questions 5 of who, what, how, why and then provide further details? 6 Is that right? 7 A. Yes, it does. I think it's important to point out, 8 somebody mentioned before about, we are definitely not 9 taking our eye off child sexual exploitation, but what 10 we have certainly noticed is, exploitation is like 11 a Venn diagram with overlapping circles. So my concern 12 would be, in treating child sexual exploitation in 13 isolation, you could actually operate in silos and 14 therefore not appreciate the full risks of exploitation 15 in the county. 16 So that's why, certainly, as a county, we wanted to 17 look at wider exploitation rather than remain just 18 focused on child sexual exploitation. 19 Q. Can we have a short look, please, at internal page _012, 20 which gives us the victim profile for the area. Forgive 21 me. I think it is a later page. Just bear with me 22 a second. Yes, internal page _022, sorry. This gives 23 a breakdown of the understanding of the profile of 24 the victims of child sexual exploitation. There's an 25 earlier page about something different. This sets out,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

1 does it, broadly the force's understanding in relation
 2 to the division by gender -- can you see that? --
 3 **A. Yes, that's correct.**
 4 Q. -- on the left-hand side, and by ethnicity?
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. Is there anything that you'd like to draw out from this
 7 page that gives a profile on one page of what's
 8 understood about victims?
 9 **A. Yeah. I think the point made earlier on in the week is**
 10 **quite valid; only 15 per cent of those at risk of child**
 11 **sexual exploitation, according to our figures, are male.**
 12 **Again, the research would suggest, in reality, that is**
 13 **much higher. So, for me, it means that, as**
 14 **a partnership, we need to work harder to see how we can**
 15 **find out more information about the risks to boys. It**
 16 **also highlights some gaps around the police systems --**
 17 **again, it was difficult, on some occasions, to extract**
 18 **details around ethnicity, so, again, that was a bit of**
 19 **a barrier, but that has now been changed, so our**
 20 **systems, over time, should start producing more**
 21 **meaningful data.**
 22 Again, in relation to the age of the victims, if you
 23 look at the profile from 2014, it seems to me that the
 24 age of the victims have become younger compared to the
 25 average age that was set out in 2014, and, again, if you

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1 **minorities, may be being at risk of exploitation.**
 2 Q. Over the page, please, two pages, to internal page _025.
 3 I think we see a very similar visual representation of
 4 what's understood about your perpetrator profile as
 5 at October 2019. Do we see -- I think it is not that
 6 page. It is _024, I'm sorry if I said _025, Danny. It
 7 is page _024 sets out, I think, a similar division by
 8 gender and by ethnicity. Do you want to make any
 9 observation about that?
 10 **A. No, other than to highlight the point I raised earlier**
 11 **about the average age of the perpetrator. As you can**
 12 **see, we are looking in the range mainly between 12 and**
 13 **20 for the bulk of those that appear to be exploiting**
 14 **young people.**
 15 Q. I don't invite you to bring it up, but just to be clear,
 16 that was the problem profile from October 2019. We have
 17 also been provided with your ROCU threat assessment
 18 from November 2019. That's part of the paperwork you
 19 provided. Is there anything in particular you'd like
 20 the draw out from that?
 21 **A. No, thank you.**
 22 Q. We have heard some evidence already about certain
 23 awareness-raising programmes that have been put in
 24 place. I won't pull it up in any detail, but can I just
 25 look briefly, please, at WCC000218, which I think

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1 **then go on to look at the average age of the offenders,**
 2 **the difference between the victim and the offender,**
 3 **again, that gap appears to have narrowed. So in lots**
 4 **and lots of cases, you appear to be having peer-on-peer**
 5 **abuse, based on the information that we have certainly**
 6 **collected in the report.**
 7 Q. The text at the top left says that this involved data
 8 collected from 162 CSE victims. It says at the end of
 9 the boxed text:
 10 "Of note is that ethnicity is not a mandatory field
 11 within Athena ..."
 12 Which I assume is your recording system:
 13 "... which is evident from over 50 per cent of
 14 ethnicity within males and females not being recorded."
 15 Can you help us with that, please?
 16 **A. In 2017, we adopted a new police information crime**
 17 **recording system called Athena. Again, with any new**
 18 **system, it takes a while to get up to speed with how it**
 19 **all works. Normally, where we are required to input it,**
 20 **the screen won't allow you to move on until you put**
 21 **something in the box. Sadly, this wasn't one of those**
 22 **boxes in Athena, so officers would sometimes not fill in**
 23 **the box, but a directive has now been given that this is**
 24 **a box that we definitely need to fill because we**
 25 **definitely need to understand which groups, which ethnic**

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1 relates to what we heard some evidence about before from
 2 Mr Minns. I think this was a child sexual exploitation
 3 awareness week and there was, I think, within it part of
 4 that -- if we go to internal page 5, please -- a focus
 5 on "Something's Not Right". Do you want to just tell us
 6 a little bit about the force's role in that?
 7 **A. Yes. So, as Mr Minns highlighted, through the Police**
 8 **and Crime Commissioner, we have Barnardo's that work**
 9 **alongside us as part of the multi-agency team, and they**
 10 **oversee and drive a lot of the activity around the**
 11 **"Something's Not Right" campaign. So we do an awful lot**
 12 **of work with the community to raise awareness around CSE**
 13 **and CE, things which is -- again, when it's CSE**
 14 **awareness week, they'll go into shopping centres, they**
 15 **will deliver inputs to schools, to students. It's**
 16 **a really valuable addition to the multi-agency team. We**
 17 **are currently in the process of refreshing it again as**
 18 **part of the partnership response to make sure it still**
 19 **remains fit for purpose.**
 20 **In addition to some of the things that you've got up**
 21 **on the screen now, through our youth engagement team**
 22 **they have made use of some virtual reality software to**
 23 **put together a video on -- to try and identify to young**
 24 **people how drink and alcohol can make them vulnerable**
 25 **and therefore may make them become exploited by those**

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<p>1 who want to exploit young people. We have also done 2 a similar virtual reality project with Warwick 3 University and on this project we have tried to get 4 across how it is possible for young people to find 5 themselves being exploited through county lines. This 6 was put together by students from the university because 7 we wanted it to be current and reflect the language 8 spoken by young people rather than me as a nearly 9 50-year-old person. 10 Q. Just briefly for our purposes around the theme of male 11 victims, just to record please, go to internal page 9 of 12 this, it looks as if what happens during this pack is 13 there are different themes around different issues 14 within child sexual exploitation that are brought out 15 perhaps on different days, and this was a particular 16 focus on conveying the message that sexual exploitation 17 happens to both boys and girls, if we scroll in on that 18 page at the top, please, including the "Did you know" 19 bullet point? Are these press lines or the 20 communication lines that are used? 21 A. Yes, and I think it is really important that -- 22 exploitation affects everybody. Again, those that are 23 willing to exploit vulnerabilities don't care whether 24 they're boys, girls, whether they have a disability, so 25 we need to make sure that -- talk about contextual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 safeguarding. We all have a responsibility to look out 2 for those that are going to exploit children and young 3 people. So we need to make sure people know what to 4 look for. That's why it's good that we highlight things 5 such as the risk to boys, such as the risk to people 6 with disabilities. 7 Q. Having established the evidence about your profile, can 8 I bring up, please, WSP000063, which is the disruption 9 toolkit that the West Midlands metropolitan area has, 10 dated I think it is November 2016. Is that right? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. This is, I think, a local toolkit that covers a broader 13 area than just Warwickshire; is that right? 14 A. Yes. I think it's really -- it is a good point to put 15 on record, that this was the West Midlands region, so 16 technically, we don't form -- we didn't form part of 17 the region where this document was produced but it was 18 an excellent document, so we looked to adopt it to 19 inform our staff. As you're aware, since then, the NWG 20 have since put together a further document which builds 21 on the work of the "See Me, Hear Me" and the NWG 22 document is probably one of the best documents that I've 23 certainly seen and we have certainly circulated it 24 widely as the document to refer back to if you want to 25 be fully informed around all your disruption options to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>
<p>1 try and tackle exploitation. 2 Q. I think the document you're talking about we have 3 already seen on screen, but that's a very long document 4 that sets out a range of civil law and other remedies or 5 disruptive tactics. You have set out some evidence in 6 your witness statements, and I'll just put the paragraph 7 numbers on the record, please, so in your witness 8 statement WSP000176, paragraphs 20 to 22, 33 to 34, 49 9 to 72, and then you have given some evidence in your 10 later witness statements -- I'll just scroll in on one 11 paragraph, please, it's WSP000176_006, paragraph 22 that 12 goes over the page, that sets out the key criminal 13 operations that I think have been undertaken by the 14 police force on the CSE issue in recent years. We are 15 going to hear reference to Operation Annan, 16 Operation Jive. There was a series of operations that 17 you refer there. So it's WSP000176_006-007, please. We 18 can just see a list of those operations at your 19 paragraph 22. Is there anything else in particular that 20 you want to tell us about the force's approach to 21 disruption other than what I have alluded to already? 22 A. No, thank you. 23 Q. You can take that down, I think. Thank you. We have 24 been provided with some evidence, as I think you're 25 aware, from the Crown Prosecution Service in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>	<p>1 West Midlands. I think you have been invited to reflect 2 on some of the evidence that's given there. We can 3 perhaps just bring up, please, the witness evidence 4 here. It's CPS004976_004. Just bring up, please, 5 paragraph 4(d)(i) -- it begins on internal page _006, 6 paragraph 4, and going over the page to internal 7 page _007. There are some figures given, I think, for 8 cases that have been taken to the CPS and charged or not 9 charged. Do you see those figures at the top of 10 page _007? 11 A. I do. 12 Q. Do you want to provide any comment on this evidence? 13 A. No -- well, yes, I do, actually. The only points 14 I would raise, as has been highlighted throughout the 15 week, prosecuting people for child exploitation is 16 actually quite tricky, because in almost all of our 17 investigations, you have an evidential account from the 18 victim, and not only do you have the evidential account, 19 you will often be able to secure additional evidence, 20 such as forensic examination, recovering clothing, 21 recovering mobile phones, and from the detailed account 22 you are then able to collect additional supporting 23 evidence to, in effect, make a case far stronger. 24 In exploitation cases, in my experience, it's very 25 rare that -- because of the way children and young</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 people feel, they're not ready to disclose, it's very 2 difficult to actually secure an account, an evidential 3 account, from a child. So trying to prosecute sexual 4 offences without a detailed evidential account becomes 5 really, really difficult, so we talk about evidence-led 6 prosecutions. To prove that a sexual act has taken 7 place in a private place through evidence led is almost 8 impossible, in my experience. So we've heard from A2 9 around messages that were sent and received, which does 10 indicate that A1 was being exploited, but there's 11 a difference between what indicates and the evidential 12 burden of proof in order that we can prosecute somebody 13 for a really serious crime.</p> <p>14 Q. Just pausing there, because I will come back to ask you 15 some questions about that case. Can I ask you to look 16 at paragraph 7(a), please, of this witness statement, on 17 internal page _009, where the prosecutor who has given 18 this evidence, Lawrence English, says at 7(a) that there 19 are very few CSE cases referred to the CPS in 20 Warwickshire. When such cases are referred, the early 21 investigative advice avenue is generally not the 22 preferred option, as there appears to have been a lack 23 of understanding of the purpose of EIA and the process 24 by which to access it. 25 First of all, can you help with anything else about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 the first part of that statement, that there are very 2 few CSE cases referred to the CPS by the police?</p> <p>3 A. Again, I think, when you are talking about people that 4 are used to investigating child sexual exploitation or 5 exploitation, they have an awareness of what the 6 evidential requirements are for the kind of Crown 7 Prosecution Service. So my belief would be, the reason 8 why not many cases have been referred is because 9 officers know what the kind of various different 10 thresholds are. The other point to raise is, the CPS 11 were in a region with West Midlands Police, 12 Staffordshire Police and West Mercia Police. All of 13 those forces, in size terms, are huge compared to 14 Warwickshire. So in pure numbers terms, yes, we would 15 refer far fewer than those other forces.</p> <p>16 Q. What's your understanding of the purpose of the EIA 17 that's described there?</p> <p>18 A. The purpose of the EIA -- it's not only in these kind of 19 cases but it's in quite a lot of serious crime -- is to 20 seek out some early legal advice from the lawyers to, in 21 effect, try and focus on the key issues that will enable 22 you to build a successful prosecution in as timely and 23 efficient a manner as possible.</p> <p>24 Q. How frequently, in your experience, is that used in CSE 25 or CSEN cases?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>
<p>1 A. Again, I couldn't comment on how many occasions it's 2 been used, but all I do know is the team, and certainly 3 the DCI in charge of the team, they have conversations 4 with Mr English, who provided this statement. So they 5 do know it's there and they would -- I'm pretty 6 confident they would do it if they felt they needed to.</p> <p>7 Q. In one part of your witness statement -- we can bring 8 that document down now, Danny. In one part of your 9 witness evidence, you say this: 10 "In Warwickshire, we do not differentiate between 11 online and offline exploitation and therefore the 12 procedures followed are the same in either case." 13 What is the rationale for not distinguishing between 14 those two, in terms of response?</p> <p>15 A. What we're trying to say there is, whether it's online 16 or not, it is exploitation. So we do have access to 17 specialist online teams and it is not uncommon, as and 18 when required, for the online team and the exploitation 19 team to work together on various operations. That's the 20 reason for that.</p> <p>21 Q. Just turning a little bit more to the facts of CS-A1's 22 case, as you have heard through the evidence of CS-A2. 23 You have, I think, seen a copy of CS-A2's statement, 24 haven't you, Mr Hill? 25 A. Yes, thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>	<p>1 Q. I think, although we don't need to bring it up, if you 2 have access to a copy of it, it's at paragraph 43 3 I think that there are a series of concerns that are set 4 out by CS-A2 because she had referred a series of 5 complaints to the IOPC. So there are a series of issues 6 set out within there around the passing of intelligence 7 and what she perceives to be ineffective disruption. 8 I think you heard her evidence this morning about the 9 timing of CAWNs being issued and things of that nature. 10 Can you respond now, having reflected on the 11 evidence, to the various concerns she's raised about 12 both profiling elements but also the disruption elements 13 in her child's case?</p> <p>14 A. Again, I did listen to A2's evidence this morning and 15 I do accept there were occasions where Warwickshire 16 Police did not get everything right, but I do think it's 17 important to highlight that this was the most 18 challenging case that we have probably had to deal with. 19 What we did try to do with the resources we had 20 available was to try to keep A1 safe. We didn't always 21 get things right, and there were certainly things we 22 could have done sooner or differently. 23 The case of A1 highlights -- we're here to talk 24 about organised network but in many ways that was part 25 of the problem, it wasn't in the sense of an organised</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

1 network, it was loose associations, friendships changing
 2 frequently. I don't know if you have Facebook, but when
 3 you use Facebook, for example, it will make links to
 4 random people you don't even really, really know. So
 5 these were some of the kind of challenges we faced. A2
 6 spoke about we were always playing catch-up, and I think
 7 I accept that comment. That was true.
 8 The cases are really difficult to deal with, and
 9 I acknowledge how upsetting it must have been for A2.
 10 Again, before coming to give evidence to the hearing,
 11 I spoke to one of the officers on the team, and they,
 12 too, spoke about, actually, being scared about taking
 13 time off from work because they were worried about the
 14 harm that would come to A1.
 15 So it's not just about the impact it has on A1, A2;
 16 officers and professionals take these cases personally.
 17 Q. One of the issues, as you know, that she's raised --
 18 specifically she says this in the IOPC complaint:
 19 "We can't understand why CAWN notices weren't issued
 20 much sooner and we can't see any evidence of strategic
 21 measures taken to prevent these males committing these
 22 serious sexual crimes against our daughter."
 23 Can you deal with the issue of the earlier service
 24 of CAWN notices in that case?
 25 A. Yes, so we are talking around about 2017 here. In 2017,

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1 exploited, but what was often a feature when police
 2 spoke to A1, she wasn't ready to talk about the
 3 exploitation. We had very limited information to go on.
 4 When A1 would talk about it, quite often she would
 5 say that somebody else had access to her phone, somebody
 6 else had sent the message, the message was not to be
 7 taken seriously. So these are all the kind of things we
 8 had to battle with. But I do clearly, clearly
 9 acknowledge how upsetting and how distressing it would
 10 have been for A1's mum.
 11 Q. A further specific question on this: why was a recovery
 12 order not used or any of the other enforcement
 13 procedures listed in WSP000063, which I think is the
 14 West Midlands toolkit I just took you to, when police
 15 were aware that CS-A1, who had just turned 14, was
 16 spending much of her time at the home of an adult male,
 17 CS-F119?
 18 A. Yes, recovery orders are an order that's applied for by
 19 children's services rather than the police. So, yes,
 20 certainly we have a responsibility to provide
 21 information to the wider partnership to inform that
 22 decision making, but it would be for children's services
 23 to comment on why they didn't consider such an order,
 24 and I would imagine there were valid reasons for it,
 25 because there's a difference, quite often, between

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1 child abduction warning notices were just coming to the
 2 fore, and it's clear in the early stages that, yes, we
 3 could have made earlier use of child abduction warning
 4 notices. That is true. But since 2017 and beyond, we
 5 have done a lot of work to make sure that everybody is
 6 aware of child abduction warning notices, so we have our
 7 missing person supervisor goes in to deliver inputs to
 8 student officers, we have raised the issue at sergeants'
 9 development days and during CPD events. So the
 10 awareness around child abduction warning notices is
 11 there now.
 12 But we have lots of things around core safeguarding
 13 practice and procedures. You keep having to come back
 14 around in a circle to the beginning because skills and
 15 knowledge fade and drop off. So we will always be, in
 16 that regard, a work in progress.
 17 Q. I think one of the other elements of CS-A2's concern was
 18 her view that the police were not acting proactively
 19 enough on the information that she was providing, having
 20 seen certain messages on her daughter's phone. Do you
 21 want to respond to that?
 22 A. Yes. So there are a number of cases that A2 referred.
 23 One, for example, was where, to the best of my
 24 knowledge, a message was intercepted from A1 to one of
 25 her friends, where she kind of spoke about being

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1 information, intelligence and evidence to satisfy the
 2 court, even to civil standard, that an order is
 3 appropriate.
 4 Q. Looking at the topics list, you were asked to review
 5 some other cases for disruption activity. Did you
 6 manage to review the case of CS-A19?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. This was a case where, as far as we understand it, just
 9 to assist the chair and panel a little bit with some of
 10 the background to this, this child was understood to be
 11 associating with -- well, there were associated male
 12 perpetrators. This was a child who'd been, I think,
 13 featured partly in Operation Annan; is that right?
 14 A. Yes, that's correct.
 15 Q. And, as far as the chronology is concerned, the chair
 16 and panel have seen and had access to a timeline. Just
 17 to orientate this in terms of dates, by way of
 18 background, the understanding is that CS-A19 had various
 19 difficulties in childhood. When she was 13, there were
 20 concerns about the risk of child sexual exploitation and
 21 there were concerns in particular that she was being
 22 sexually exploited at house parties. Is that your
 23 understanding?
 24 A. Yes, that's correct.
 25 Q. And that this timeline for her runs from June 2014

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<p>1 I think right up to April 2018. There were concerns 2 about attending at parties, and, in particular, there 3 was a named individual who was arranging invitations to 4 these parties. It's not immediately apparent what 5 disruption activity against that named male took place. 6 Can you help with that? 7 A. No, I'm sorry, I can't help with those -- a specific 8 answer to that question. 9 Q. When we put on the topics list "Disruption in relation 10 to named male", was it apparent to you that that was the 11 named male that was intended? 12 A. Which named male are we talking about, please? 13 Q. So there is -- the person inviting the child to these 14 parties was the male who was named in some of 15 the information within the case file. It doesn't sound 16 like you're able to assist with the disruption about 17 that; is that right? 18 A. No, all I can say in relation to that investigation, 19 that once the disclosure was made, an arrest operation 20 took place quite quickly. It was planned for 21 13 February, and four people were arrested, and, again, 22 advice was sought from CPS direct, and I believe 23 somebody was initially charged with serious sexual 24 offences concerning what was going on at their location. 25 Following that, I believe one of the people certainly</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 was remanded in custody. 2 Q. CS-A146 was another case that you were invited to look 3 at. As far as that case is concerned, this was a case 4 where the child was one of the individuals involved in 5 Operation Jive. Is that right? 6 A. That's correct. 7 Q. The understanding from the paperwork around this is that 8 there was some delay, I think, as mentioned on the 9 topics list, in executing warrants, partly due to 10 research going on into gang activity. Is that what you 11 have understood took place here? 12 A. Yes. So, again, I think it's important, when we talk 13 about this case, that it was quite complex, in the sense 14 that the names weren't easily available. In effect, 15 they had to kind of piece together the jigsaw to find 16 those people who were responsible for the act. So 17 although it did take a while until the arrest operation 18 took place, it wasn't because people weren't trying hard 19 to do something about it. It was around piecing 20 together the snippets of information, and once those 21 snippets of information were pieced together, it was 22 about engaging with a number of the police forces to 23 pull together an operation to arrange for these people 24 to be arrested. 25 Q. Was the issue about gang activity seen as more</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>
<p>1 significant than the CSE issue? 2 A. No. Again, had -- the focus of the CE team or CSE team 3 is to deal with child sexual exploitation, so the gang 4 thing wasn't -- it was a consideration, but the aim of 5 the team was to tackle child sexual exploitation, and as 6 soon as they were in a position to do that, with the 7 support of a number of forces, that's what they did. 8 There was excellent collaboration between Warwickshire, 9 West Midlands Police and the Metropolitan Police at 10 a time in policing where probably resources were at an 11 all-time low. 12 Q. In CS-A151's case there were also concerns about 13 gang-related activity; is that right? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. A151. Our understanding of the background to that case 16 is there was evidence that the child had been trafficked 17 for sexual purposes in June 2018. But that, as 18 at August 2018, the suspects had not been arrested 19 because, again, there was a delay in executing warrants 20 because of consideration for gang activity. Again, can 21 you reflect on whether the CSE element, if you like, 22 was -- well, there was disruptive action being delayed 23 on that side because of the investigation of the gang 24 side of things? 25 A. No, that definitely isn't the case, because the gang of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>	<p>1 individuals that you're talking about lived 2 predominantly in the West Midlands area, so 3 West Midlands Police were continuing to look at these 4 people whilst we continued to try and identify -- quite 5 often with these cases you might have difficulties in 6 identifying the names because you maybe have snippets 7 from Snapchat or suchlike and then you have to try and 8 identify those before you can actually take any kind of 9 positive action. 10 Q. I think you were also asked to look at CS-A300, which 11 involves a child where there's a looked-after child, 12 I think, and evidence suggests there were a high number 13 of missing episodes and that the child had been groomed 14 and sexually exploited by adult males. 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. It appears there was evidence that a carer had taken 17 pictures of him being picked up by strangers. Can you 18 comment on the level of disruption activity in that 19 case? 20 A. Yes, I can. Again, I have spoken to the officer in the 21 case about this case. He particularly praised the 22 foster carer that was working with this young person. 23 You're right, there was an image obtained and the 24 suspect was arrested and interviewed relatively quickly; 25 denied the offence, so I'm advised, describing that it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

1 was a brotherly friendship and he denied allowing A300
 2 to stay over. Based on my assessment of the case, A300
 3 was clearly being exploited, but unfortunately there
 4 wasn't sufficient evidence to enable the prosecution.
 5 The officer didn't stop there. This young person
 6 then moved into semi-independent living, so I'm told,
 7 and the officer travelled to a different location to
 8 check on his welfare and, having done so, he fed back
 9 some concerns that he had around the suitability of
 10 the location and its proximity to places that could
 11 expose A300 to further exploitation.
 12 So, again, it's something for us all to keep in
 13 mind, really, that when a child goes from 17 and
 14 364 days into 18, we just need to make sure that they
 15 don't fall off a cliff edge and they do receive
 16 appropriate support, which, again, is why children's
 17 services put a member of adult services in the child
 18 exploitation team to deal with those kind of cliff-edge
 19 type issues.
 20 MS HILL: Chair, I see the time. I have a few more
 21 questions for Mr Hill, I think no more than between
 22 seven and ten minutes. Are you content for me to
 23 proceed?
 24 THE CHAIR: Please do so.
 25 MS HILL: Mr Hill, having looked back at all those cases,

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1 indicate that you have given evidence about these topics
 2 in your first witness statement, WSP000176, paragraphs
 3 135 to 149 and 155 to 161, reference witness statement
 4 WSP000206 at paragraphs 58 to 69. You have explained in
 5 all of those paragraphs the work that the police do in
 6 relation to the missing persons team and police missing
 7 coordinator, the missing intervention meetings, and the
 8 work with residential care homes on repeated missing
 9 episodes. You have also, I think -- I hope I can
 10 summarise your evidence fairly -- explained what use of
 11 intelligence is made from -- what use is made of
 12 the intelligence gathered during RHIs.
 13 Can you tell us a little bit about the use of
 14 the "absent" category?
 15 A. Yes, we certainly don't use the "absent" category in
 16 Warwickshire. I think it is fair to say a child who
 17 goes missing will always be a priority for police, so we
 18 do not use "absent", we do not use "low risk". We
 19 recognise that a child going missing, in whatever
 20 circumstances, must be, at the very least, medium or
 21 high, for a whole host of different reasons, and
 22 exploitation is clearly one that we are concerned about.
 23 Q. Can you help us a little bit with the adoption of
 24 the Philomena Protocol, please?
 25 A. Yes, the Philomena Protocol was first introduced,

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1 knowing the focus of the investigation is on disruption
 2 within this team, is there anything else you would like
 3 to share with the panel about what might have been done
 4 differently in these cases?
 5 A. No, I think it's a really, really good point. I think,
 6 in policing, we do reflect on what we have done and we
 7 always look for things that we could do better. Yes,
 8 there are certainly occasions where we could have issued
 9 CAWNs sooner. Yes, there are occasions where perhaps we
 10 could consider more evidence-led civil orders, so we
 11 take away some of the burden on those that have been
 12 exploited on making forward disclosures.
 13 I think what it does do is, it just highlights the
 14 fact of how challenging these cases are and how we all
 15 have responsibility to work harder to prevent the
 16 exploitation taking place in the first place, and I pick
 17 up on the point quite often it isn't possible in the
 18 early stages to secure a prosecution, so we have got to
 19 get the balance right between safeguarding, evidence
 20 gathering and disruption.
 21 Q. I'm going to move on now to deal with the other themes
 22 within this investigation, perhaps much more briefly.
 23 Dealing firstly with missing children, Return Home
 24 Interviews and looked-after children. Can I, just for
 25 the note, please -- I'm not going to bring it up --

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1 I believe, in Durham. It's about preparing for when
 2 a child could go missing. Quite often, certainly in the
 3 past, we were reactive. So if, for example, you have
 4 a child placed with foster care -- in foster care and
 5 that child was to go missing, it would involve an
 6 officer going to the foster carer to elicit information
 7 around the child, around the networks, around the
 8 communication methods, and quite often foster carers
 9 wouldn't have taken the time or had the opportunity to
 10 collate the information in advance. So what we are
 11 trying to do with this procedure is almost put ourselves
 12 on the front foot, that the moment a child goes missing
 13 we, as an organisation, have the information so we can
 14 respond in a far more timely fashion and hopefully
 15 locate the child before they have been missing too long
 16 and come to harm.
 17 Q. You have provided the inquiry with a series of
 18 documents, in fact bringing the inquiry right up to
 19 date. I don't need to bring it up, but just for the
 20 note, for example, you have given us the CSE missing and
 21 tracking operational group minutes from as recent
 22 as June of this year, that's WCC000413. Broadly, those
 23 meetings are taking place, I think, on a regular
 24 basis -- this one had taken place I think about four
 25 months after the previous meeting. Is that about right?

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1 **A. Yes. For me, the operation group meeting -- it's a good**
 2 **point that you raise, actually. The idea of that is to**
 3 **encourage the wider partnership to come together to**
 4 **share intelligence, information, in order that we can**
 5 **pick up on those kind of patterns and trends before they**
 6 **develop into something significant.**
 7 **If you look back in my policing career, the police,**
 8 **five/ten years ago, were very reluctant and cagey around**
 9 **sharing intelligence information with anybody. That's**
 10 **just the way we were. We were very protective. But now**
 11 **I think we are all abundantly clear what our obligations**
 12 **are when it comes to protecting vulnerable people and**
 13 **safeguarding children that are being exploited, so that**
 14 **works really effectively.**
 15 **Q. I won't bring up the details but you have also provided**
 16 **some trend analysis from September 2019 about missing**
 17 **children and Return Home Interviews -- WCC000162 -- and**
 18 **the question specifically that I have agreed to put to**
 19 **you is this: you say that the force does not hold**
 20 **information on the numbers of looked-after children**
 21 **assessed as at risk of CSE or victims of CSE. Can you**
 22 **explain what the reason for that omission is?**
 23 **A. Yes. From our perspective, as has already been spoken**
 24 **about, we are a multi-agency, colocated team. We sit**
 25 **next to children's services, who have access to this**

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1 comment on those specifically unless there is anything
 2 crucial on those themes you feel you need to add.
 3 Thank you very much, Mr Hill. Those are all my
 4 questions.
 5 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Hill. I have one
 6 question for you now and then I will ask my colleagues
 7 if they have any further questions.
 8 Questions from THE PANEL
 9 THE CHAIR: You're part of a multi-agency team. Can you
 10 tell me if you also deal with referrals about threats of
 11 violence or other forms of threat to the families of
 12 children who are being sexually exploited, in other
 13 words, through their siblings or their parents? I'm
 14 thinking of things like threats of fire bombing of
 15 a property or whatever?
 16 **A. Yes. Although I can't give any specific examples of**
 17 **that, chair, I would expect that that would be discussed**
 18 **as part of the multi-agency meeting if that information**
 19 **was available in order that we could properly respond**
 20 **and put in appropriate safeguarding measures, because**
 21 **it's not just about protecting the child that's being**
 22 **exploited, it's about protecting the wider family and**
 23 **the community.**
 24 THE CHAIR: Just to expand a little on that, if the threats
 25 come, of course, immediately with those perpetrators

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1 **information and will talk about this information and**
 2 **will provide this information. So although the police**
 3 **do not keep records of it, we are aware of the data,**
 4 **it's shared at various different forums, so it's not**
 5 **that we are missing something that we can't readily**
 6 **obtain and talk about.**
 7 **Q. You were asked to look at some of the children's cases**
 8 **with this particular theme in mind. In particular, you**
 9 **were asked to look at CS-A1, CS-A216 and CS-A300 with**
 10 **this broad theme of Return Home Interviews, looked-after**
 11 **children and missing episodes. Having reflected on**
 12 **those cases, is there anything that you think could have**
 13 **been done differently?**
 14 **A. What I would say is, just to highlight just how**
 15 **important it is to conduct those Return Home Interviews.**
 16 **Even if you get very limited information back from the**
 17 **person, it enables you or the police to update all the**
 18 **systems so the next time the child goes missing, we are**
 19 **better able to respond and we are better able to go to**
 20 **the locations where it's most likely the child is to be**
 21 **found. So, again, I'm a big believer in the value of**
 22 **completing Return Home Interviews.**
 23 **Q. Mr Hill, just for the record, you have given evidence in**
 24 **your witness statement around partnership working and**
 25 **also around audit. I don't propose to invite you to**

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1 sitting outside the house, for example, who would deal
 2 with that?
 3 **A. Again, the immediate concerns, they would go through to**
 4 **the control centre. The control centre would complete**
 5 **a THRIVE assessment, to decide how urgent or not the**
 6 **incident was, and, based on the example you are**
 7 **describing, in my view that would be graded as an**
 8 **immediate response and the nearest patrol resource would**
 9 **be sent to try to deal with it.**
 10 THE CHAIR: Would you be confident that they are dealt with
 11 as an immediate response?
 12 **A. Yes. Again, assuming that there are resources**
 13 **available. An incident such as that, I would be**
 14 **disappointed if we didn't send a car in the**
 15 **circumstances.**
 16 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Ms Sharpling?
 17 MS SHARPLING: Thank you, chair, thank you, Mr Hill.
 18 One, I suppose, slightly obvious question to start
 19 with: how does Warwickshire use its problem profile?
 20 What purpose does it serve? How does it affect practice
 21 in (overspeaking) area?
 22 **A. That's a really good question you raise because we do**
 23 **talk a lot about problem profiles. The good thing about**
 24 **the multi-agency team, the team itself are having**
 25 **regular discussions. The CE coordinator from the police**

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1 perspective is collating all the information from
 2 children's services, from police systems, so, as
 3 organisations, we have good day-to-day knowledge of what
 4 the problems are.
 5 The reason why we did the problem profile in 2019 is
 6 because, again, it became apparent that the problem was
 7 changing, so we needed to, in effect, understand the
 8 problem in order that we could share the information
 9 with the wider partners, because we are not going to
 10 solve exploitation through the police and the children's
 11 services and Barnardo's alone; we have got to involve
 12 the community, families, schools. So what we have done
 13 with the exploitation profile is, we have shared it
 14 through the CE and missing subgroup as part of
 15 the safeguarding board, so, again, we want people to
 16 have it on their agenda, to start talking about it, to
 17 realise, even though Warwickshire is quite a nice place
 18 to live, exploitation is going on in our communities and
 19 we need to do something about it.
 20 MS SHARPLING: Is there a link between the problem profile,
 21 which is created at fairly senior levels within the
 22 police force, and the development of practice on the
 23 front-line? How does that work? How does the document
 24 at the top of the office become a practical reality to
 25 front-line officers and support officers?

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1 the coordinator would speak to the detective inspector
 2 in charge of the team to say, "We have got an emerging
 3 threat here. What are we going to do about it?"
 4 MS SHARPLING: We have heard a lot during the course of this
 5 investigation thus far on some of the complexities of
 6 dealing with these cases, but also there have been
 7 matters of some simplicity which can be undertaken to
 8 prevent child sexual abuse. I'm thinking, for example,
 9 the training of cab drivers --
 10 **A. Yes.**
 11 MS SHARPLING: -- understanding intelligence information
 12 from hoteliers, landlords of public houses, owners of
 13 take away restaurants, that sort of thing. How far is
 14 that built into your system of making sure that children
 15 are kept safe.
 16 **A. That's a really good point. So, as has already been**
 17 **mentioned through the "Something's Not Right" campaign,**
 18 **through Barnardo's, training has been delivered to taxi**
 19 **drivers, it has been delivered to hotels, they do do**
 20 **work in the community, they do do work in schools. But,**
 21 **you're right, we have all got to do a lot more.**
 22 **Schools, families, communities, it is clearly something**
 23 **that we have all got to come together on. We need to**
 24 **make it abundantly clear that exploitation is not going**
 25 **to be tolerated.**

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1 **A. I think, in reality, what it does do, it identifies the**
 2 **extent of the problem, and not only the extent of**
 3 **the problem, but the harm caused by the problem, and it**
 4 **enables people like myself to actually fight our corner,**
 5 **if there wasn't sufficient resources, to say, "Are we**
 6 **aware that this is the threat currently being faced in**
 7 **Warwickshire? Are we satisfied as an organisation that**
 8 **we are focusing enough attention on this problem when**
 9 **set against all the other different challenges that also**
 10 **create problems for the community?"**
 11 MS SHARPLING: Moving on to intelligence information, your
 12 neighbourhood officers and your community support
 13 officers should be very familiar with issues in their
 14 local community. How is that captured and used for the
 15 purposes of preventing or dealing with child sexual
 16 exploitation?
 17 **A. Yes, so, again, the child sexual exploitation team has**
 18 **got a good reputation within Warwickshire Police, so the**
 19 **first point of call, if there were any kind of concerns,**
 20 **would be to pick up the phone and speak to a member of**
 21 **the team. They have intelligence systems, so they can**
 22 **put intelligence into it. They are automatically**
 23 **flagged and examined by our child exploitation**
 24 **coordinator, so, again, if there is an emerging issue in**
 25 **any particular geographic area, I would hope and expect**

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1 **It is a wicked problem. We have just got to keep**
 2 **trying and, again, as you have heard today, we won't**
 3 **always get things right, but we have got to keep trying**
 4 **our best because it is not acceptable in anybody's book**
 5 **that a young person should have their life blighted**
 6 **because they have been exploited.**
 7 MS SHARPLING: Thank you. That's all I ask.
 8 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr Frank?
 9 MR FRANK: No, thank you.
 10 THE CHAIR: Sir Malcolm?
 11 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Just one, or maybe one and a half,
 12 if I may.
 13 Picking up on a few of your answers to some of
 14 the questions just being posed, to what extent do you
 15 think that the expression "child sexual exploitation" is
 16 sufficiently well understood outside of the specialist
 17 teams, or indeed even within the specialist teams, to
 18 make sure that it is, shall we say, properly
 19 operationalised? Is there any sort of difficulty around
 20 an understanding of what precisely is meant to be
 21 embraced by this from a practical perspective?
 22 **A. No, I'm relatively confident that most patrol staff**
 23 **would have an idea. Again, we provide education at all**
 24 **levels, really, so the 13 strands of public protection,**
 25 **now 14 strands of public protection, forms part of**

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1 police basic training, and that's given to police
 2 community support officers. The team go out and deliver
 3 briefings, they go out and deliver inputs to supervisors
 4 and inspectors. I'd be disappointed if those who come
 5 into contact with young people were not fully aware of
 6 child sexual exploitation.

7 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Then, following on from that, just
 8 one other question relating to the scope of this
 9 investigation, is something about the nature of
 10 the response when it's -- the exploitation is linked to
 11 organised networks. We haven't said a great deal about
 12 the organised network element of exploitation -- of
 13 sexual exploitation of children. How does the awareness
 14 of -- what does one understand by an organised network
 15 in this sense and what impact does that have
 16 operationally on how one responds to the problems? Is
 17 there a threshold where things change when you believe
 18 you're working within the context of an organised
 19 network or is the idea of an organised network too
 20 diffuse to be of assistance here or not necessary?

21 **A. Again, the same applies not only in child exploitation**
 22 **but in organised criminal gangs, for example. The**
 23 **"organised" -- it is almost like disorganised crime**
 24 **rather than organised crime, so they're loose links,**
 25 **loose associations. They are organised in the loosest**

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1 possible sense, in my experience, through friendship
 2 groups, through interactions through social media, and
 3 suchlike, rather than perhaps how we'd all picture it.
 4 Yes, clearly, there are still going to be gangs of
 5 people that exploit young people, but in my experience,
 6 they are relatively rare, and it's the kind of loose
 7 associations, in my experience, where the exploitation
 8 is occurring at the moment.

9 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Thanks very much.
 10 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Mr Hill. We have no
 11 further questions. Thank you.

12 **A. Thank you, chair.**

13 MS HILL: Thank you very much, Mr Hill, for giving us
 14 evidence.
 15 (The witness withdrew)

16 MS HILL: We are not going to read the timeline for this
 17 area today, chair. Some submissions have been received
 18 that we need to reflect on. But can I please formally
 19 adduce the evidence from Lawrence English, Crown
 20 Prosecution Service. I have already read the URN out.
 21 Mr English has been the unit head for the CPS West
 22 Midlands Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Unit
 23 since January 2018 and sets out a range of issues around
 24 prosecution of CSEN cases.
 25 Can I also formally adduce, please, the evidence

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1 from Elaine Coleridge-Smith of the Warwickshire
 2 Safeguarding Partnership. She has been the independent
 3 chair of that partnership since September 2018 and has
 4 over ten years' experience as a local safeguarding
 5 children board independent chair. So can I formally
 6 adduce that evidence, chair?

7 That completes our evidence about the Warwickshire
 8 area.

9 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, Ms Hill. We will reconvene
 10 on Monday.

11 MS HILL: Thank you, chair.
 12 (4.24 pm)

13 (The hearing was adjourned to
 14 Monday, 28 September 2020 at 10.30 am)

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