

SECTION A: MICHAEL JOHN CARROLL (1966 - 2020)

Introduction

- 2.1. Michael John Carroll was born on [DPA] 1948 in Liverpool. He was in care as a child and lived for a period of time at St Edmund's Orphanage in the Wirral. After leaving care, Carroll maintained contact with St Edmund's and started working as a full-time member of staff at the orphanage in the early 1970s. Carroll subsequently obtained professional qualifications in childcare, in the course of which he met and developed a friendship with [Name Redacted]
- 2.2. Through [Name Redacted] Carroll came to apply in April 1977 for the position of Deputy Officer-in-Charge at Highland Road Children's Home in Lambeth. On 1 March 1978, Carroll took up this position. He worked at Highland Road until 1 January 1981, when he took up a new position of Officer-in-Charge at Angell Road Children's Home (also in Lambeth). Carroll remained in this position at Angell Road until he was dismissed by Lambeth Council for expenses fraud in August 1991. After his dismissal, Carroll does not appear to have worked in childcare again. [Sensitive/Irrelevant]
- [Sensitive/Irrelevant]
- 2.3. Carroll received his first conviction for child sexual abuse on 7 October 1966, when he was convicted of indecent assault in respect of a 12 year old boy living in St Edmund's Orphanage. The circumstances of this offence have been described as follows: Carroll entered the boy's bedroom, tickled him, pulled his pyjamas down and played with his penis / masturbated the boy. Carroll pleaded guilty at Bromborough Magistrates' Court to this offence and was sentenced to 2 years' probation. St Edmund's continued to employ Carroll after his conviction.
- 2.4. The above conviction became known to Lambeth Council in April 1986 (after Carroll had made an unsuccessful fostering application that was considered by Croydon Fostering & Adoption Panel). Carroll was the subject of disciplinary proceedings for not having disclosed this conviction, which resulted in him receiving a final written warning. He was permitted to keep working with children in his role at Angell Road. The decision not to dismiss Carroll following these disciplinary proceedings was later criticised in an independent enquiry conducted by Richard Clough in 1993.

- 2.5. In 1997, Carroll became a person of interest in Merseyside Police's Operation CARE (an investigation into child abuse in care homes in Merseyside). This eventually resulted in him being tried at Liverpool Crown Court on a total of 68 charges of child sexual abuse, relating to children in St Edmund's Orphanage and Highland Road and Angell Road Children's Homes. Carroll pleaded guilty to 35 of the charges (with the remainder left to "lie on file"). On 30 July 1999, Carroll was sentenced to a total of 10 years' imprisonment and was placed on the Sex Offenders' Register for life.
- 2.6. In 2016, Carroll was further investigated by Operation Winter Key officers on suspicion of historic sexual offences against children who were in the care of Lambeth Council. This proceeded under the operational name 'Operation Zubron'. The CPS ultimately advised that there was no realistic prospect of conviction and no further action was taken.
- 2.7. At around the same time as Operation Zubron, Carroll was also investigated by Merseyside Police on suspicion of offences against a child in the care of St Edmund's Orphanage in the 1970s. Carroll was charged with offences of indecent assault and gross indecency as a result of these allegations, but the prosecution ultimately offered no evidence against him (due to weaknesses in the evidence) and Carroll was found Not Guilty of all offences.¹
- 2.8. Carroll is still alive and remains on the Sex Offenders' Register. He lives at an address known to police and was last visited by local officers tasked with supervising such offenders on 2 May 2019.

Factual Background

Relationship between MPS officers and Michael John Carroll (1981 - 1991)

- 2.9. The Inquiry has asked a number of questions about the relationship between MPS police officers based in Brixton and Michael John Carroll during the period that Carroll was Officer-in-Charge at Angell Road (i.e. in the 1980s). In particular, the Inquiry has asked about a "work experience" scheme that was arranged for junior officers in Brixton, through which they would attend Angell Road Children's Home and help out with the children.

¹ Operation Zubron Closing Report; [DPA] Merseyside Police Supplementary Crime Report; Lambeth Council Corporate Statement, 9 December 2019, at Section 20.