

Witness Name: Mr Richard Gargini

Statement No: 1

Exhibits:

Dated: 9 June 2020

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Draft Witness Statement of Mr Richard Gargini

I, Mr Richard Gargini , will say as follows:-

1. I am a retired police officer. I retired in 2010 with over 33 years of service in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), predominantly in crime investigation and specialist roles.
2. I make this statement in response to a Rule 9 request from the Inquiry dated 22 April 2020.

2015 Police Statement

3. On 13 October 2015 I was interviewed by officers from Metropolitan Police Service's ("MPS") Operation WINTERKEY. A statement was prepared the following day based on the answers I gave in interview [MPS003953] ('my 2015 statement'). I answered the officers' questions honestly to the best of my recollection. A limited number of documents were shown to me during the course of the interview and questions were asked about their content. I had not seen those documents for at least 15 years.
4. Further to the Inquiry's rule 9 request I have been given access to many more documents that have enabled me to refresh my memory and to put matters, including those I was asked about in 2015, into context. As a result, I have come to realise that

visitors to care homes. A joint review by CHILE and Op. MIDDLETON officers was undertaken to identify any suspicious activity and potential victims, prioritising certain care home based on assessed risk. Interviews were undertaken to identify possible victims and suspects.

92. With respect to approaching victims, I decided that all contact with possible victims identified by Op. MIDDLETON would be undertaken after a risk assessment, by an appropriately trained police officer in company with an experienced social worker. This decision was regularly highlighted at office meetings and the operational arrangements were overseen by DI RANSON to ensure compliance.
93. This was a different approach taken by Op CARE who had, with the assistance of Lambeth CPT, written to a large number of individuals who had been resident at care homes run by CARROLL. I did not support this approach because it was untargeted, did not allow for a risk assessment of potential victims before approaching them and was in my view insensitive.
94. My Decision 20 on 25 January 1999 was that Op. MIDDLETON *“will not ‘cold-call’ or send correspondence to possible victims”*. I recorded the reasons for this decision as *“All victims to receive personal visit after proactive intelligence led approach. To reduce distress to victims and families.”* This decision was regularly highlighted at office meetings.
95. I have been asked how satisfied I was that Operation Middleton was fulfilling its mandate in identifying abusers. During my time as SIO I was satisfied that Op. MIDDLETON was fulfilling its mandate in identifying abusers where credible evidence or intelligence existed. I have set out below that this could have been done more quickly and more thoroughly with greater resources.

Working Together arrangements

96. I believe that the ‘working together’ arrangements between the MPS and Lambeth Council, through the CHILE team, were very effective. Those arrangements led to a coherent approach and the two teams working together well.