

211. The Principal Officer (Social Work) who chaired the Foster Panel in Lambeth seemingly also provided a written note supporting the application of Mr & Mrs C to foster the children concerned. The inquiry did not have sight of this note although the Principal Officer concerned confirmed its existence in written correspondence with the Director of Social Services some years later. Given this confirmation the inquiry judges this to be an example of gross unprofessionalism.

212. As Chair of the Foster Panel he should have remained strictly neutral and should not have become involved in this particular case in the way that he did and his professional behaviour during this time is a cause for regret and concern.

213. The inquiry has examined whether any formal or informal communication took place between Wandsworth and Lambeth staff, and between elected members during the process of the fostering application. The issue of communication between staff is addressed elsewhere in the report. There is no evidence to support any impropriety between Wandsworth and Lambeth elected members and no evidence to support impropriety between staff and elected members during the process of the fostering application.

214. Further comment is now made on matters that arose in relation to the decisions taken by Lambeth as far as the two children and Mr & Mrs C are concerned following the formal refusal to allow fostering to take place.