

time. My circulation list from the strategy meeting list included councillor Farnell, various others including the Chair of Education, Councillor Hawton.

I have been shown a copy of exhibit MD/1 a letter addressed to me dated 20th March 1991 with report attached from Rochdale Aids Unit. I know this as the Shepherd report written by Mr Philip Shepherd. I have also been shown a copy of exhibit MD/2 which is my letter responding to Mr Shepherd dated 5th April 1991. There is quite a delay in me responding to Mr Shepherd. On the day it arrived at my office I was due to go on a period of leave as it was Easter time. I dealt with my response when I returned to work. In my opinion the Shepherd report was very useful however, it was obvious to me that at the time Mr Shepherd had not been in possession of all the facts and recent events at the School and matters that had been acknowledged and were being dealt with. What he alluded to in his report was similar to the matters discussed during my strategy meeting on 8th March 1991 and he should have been fully briefed. His visit to the School was a direct result of the strategy meeting. It was meant to be a training session with the care staff but it didn't take place because the staff made complaints to him of matters that they were not willing to substantiate.

The details they gave were the same that Mr Poulton had obtained by interviewing all staff members, yet some of them saw fit to repeat these complaints to a stranger who had attended to deliver some training. At this time there were problems between the care staff, some of whom had been at the School for several years, and the teaching staff.

I was very concerned that this report and the actions of the staff at the School could lead to the identities of children being exposed and if this occurred it could be detrimental to their welfare. The report by Mr Shepherd did not highlight any further information that hadn't been gathered by Mr Poulton and discussed in the Strategy meeting.

I would say that Mr Shepherds report was accurate but the circumstances of how it came about concerned me.

I have seen a copy of exhibit PS/1 a letter addressed to me on 11th April 1991 from Mr Shepherd and a copy of exhibit MD/4 a letter dated 23rd April 1991 my response to Mr Shepherd. In his letter Mr Shepherd explained that he had not been aware of previous meetings and proposed actions. I later acknowledged this letter. I have never met or spoken to Mr Shepherd and looking back it may have helped, but in any event it never happened.

By this time I believe the Chief Executive of the council Mr Pierce was involved.

Signature:
2016

Signature witnessed by: