

**IN THE MATTER OF THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
RE: CAMBRIDGE HOUSE, KNOWL VIEW, ROCHDALE**

**SUBMISSIONS BY SLATER AND GORDON
ON THE QUESTION OF BROADCASTING PROCEEDINGS**

INTRODUCTION

1. We are instructed by 8 individuals in connection with allegations of sexual abuse relevant to this module. They are identified by ciphers A1, A2, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9 and have been designated as core participants. In addition we represent A3, who makes allegations of physical assault by Cyril Smith at Cambridge House but who has not been designated as a core participant.
2. The submissions we make here are specific to this module and we reserve the right to take a different approach in different modules.
3. It is for the chair of the Inquiry to determine the rules applicable to media coverage of the Inquiry's public hearings.
4. We note Ben Emmerson QC's submissions on this point, which are very helpful. We note that the following approach is suggested at paragraph 4:
 - a. *providing designated media seating in the hearing room and - if necessary – in an overflow annex showing live video of proceedings;*
 - b. *granting permission to use live text-based communications from the Inquiry room;*
 - c. *providing live transcription of proceedings visible within the Inquiry room; and*
 - d. *posting all transcripts and evidence to the Inquiry website.*
5. We confirm that those we represent do not object, in principle, to these measures and we support these in the spirit of the Inquiry being held in as transparent a way as possible, subject to suitable measures being put in place to preserve our clients' anonymity.
6. On that basis, we will limit our submissions to dealing with the broadcasting and/or live streaming of the Inquiry proceedings in the terms posited at paragraph 6 of Ben Emmerson QC's submissions, save the issue of 'jigsaw disclosure'. There is where the identity of a witness could be pieced together the facts presented during their evidence. This risk is particularly acute in this module as our clients all come from a relatively small community and could be recognised locally. To ameliorate this risk we suggest that any evidence should be redacted before being put in the public domain to remove reference to locations or institutions which may identify the individual, for example the area of Rochdale where the individual was born or grew up or the name of a school attended before Cambridge House /Knowl View.

7. Under s.18 of The Inquiries Act 2005 and subsequent case law, the chairman must ensure, as far as is reasonable, that the public 'see and hear a simultaneous transmission of proceedings at the Inquiry'. However, this is subject to the statutory right to anonymity under s.1 of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992. If broadcasting and/or live streaming of the Inquiry is permitted then our clients' right to anonymity will need to be protected as otherwise the Inquiry would be in breach of the statute.

8. In practice, the protection of our clients' anonymity must mean ensuring that neither audio nor video footage of them can be broadcast. Video footage would clearly identify them and audio would carry a very strong risk. If either of these were to be broadcast, not only would it be in breach of the law regarding anonymity but it would have a very significant detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of some of our clients.

9. We have taken instructions from our clients about their evidence being broadcast. Our clients recognise the importance of an open and transparent inquiry and wish to assist the inquiry provided their anonymity is properly protected. The majority of our clients are only troubled by their evidence being broadcast live if there is any chance of them being identified. Their preferences are generally either to give evidence from behind a screen or with no video feed, as long as their voices are altered to be unrecognisable and their evidence is suitably redacted to avoid jigsaw disclosure. This will encourage our clients to feel safe when presenting their evidence and will afford them the opportunity to give a candid account of their allegations which is in the public interest.

10. It is appropriate to record that two of our clients, [REDACTED] have previously spoken publically regarding their alleged abuse by Smith. For the avoidance of doubt, we will argue that this should not be a factor in deciding how their evidence is to be presented to the Inquiry. The nature of giving a general account of how the alleged abuse has affected them is very different from going into details regarding the acts alleged to have been committed.

[REDACTED]

12. In summary, whilst supporting the aim of an open and transparent inquiry, it is of paramount concern to our clients that their image and voice cannot be broadcast giving their evidence. Unless this can be agreed many of our clients will not be willing to give evidence at the Inquiry, and clearly this will not be in the public interest. They are also particularly concerned to avoid the risk of 'jigsaw' identification, as stated above.