

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5b

Statement of: LAMBERT, COLIN WILLIAM

Age if under 18: OVER 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18)

Occupation: HOLLYWELL NORTH WALES

This statement (consisting of 11 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: C LAMBERT

Date: 06/07/2015

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

I am the above named person and I reside at the address shown overleaf.

I am the previous councillor of West Heywood and represented West Heywood in the Heywood area of Rochdale.

I was elected on the 9th October 1997 taking the coun'siseat in the by election that was previously held by Jim DOBBIN. Prior to my entry into politics I was a school teacher.

The first contact I had with **RO-F72** was in 2000 when he attended a meeting with myself and Jim DOBBIN. He attended at the parliamentary office at 45 York Street in Heywood. It was unusual for him to contact us as he wa's one of our constituents but he came to us feeling that we could do something. I think this is possibly due to the fact that I had just become Chair of Education and had recently launched the NSPCC full stop campaign. He told us that he was a former social worker at Knowl View School and had been trying to get a story out about abuse.

RO-F72 handed over snippets of information and allegations about Knowl View School and I recall the snippets containing a couple of pages from both the SHEPHERD report and the Val MELLOR report. He did not pass over the full reports and I know this because when I sat down with Neil GARNHAM QC I was shown the full MELLOR report and that was the first time I ever saw it.

The snippets were passed over physically to me and Jim DOBBIN by **RO-F72** I do not recall him mentioning anything about Cyril SMITH, it was only about abuse and how it had been allowed to continue.

Signature: C Lambert
2016

Signature witnessed by:

Jim DOBBIN took the decision as MP, to review the information that [REDACTED] RO-F72 had provided and his decision was to go straight to the police. As per our office protocol and in line with our training, 95% of all casework that came into the office was passed on.

Jim DOBBIN contacted one of the superintendents however I am unable to recall if it was Ted HILL or Ged VARLEY that he spoke to.

Bob HUNTBACH was dispatched to come and talk to us and collect the paperwork that Martin DIGAN had provided. We went through what had been said and Bob HUNTBACH took the paperwork away. Three weeks later he called to arrange to meet with us and from recollection he informed me and Jim DOBBIN that there was very little given and nothing new.

Jim DOBBIN then decided at this point that we couldn't go any further with it.

I know that he later questioned whether or not he could have done anything more at the time.

I don't recall either myself or Jim DOBBIN taking the information formally to the council as we had taken the information from [REDACTED] RO-F72 to the police however if we had have done, there would be a written record within the council and a formal pre-printed letter from Jim DOBBIN. [REDACTED] RO-F72 was informed of this in a telephone conversation although he will now say that he never heard from me, but he did, as I had that conversation with him.

The enquiry came about at the time of the Paul FLOWERS incident and when Simon DANCZUK named it/the allegations about Cyril SMITH in Parliament.

I, along with Jim TAYLOR (Chief Executive) of the council and Linda FISHER (head of Legal) had already begun the process of appointing a QC for an enquiry into what the council knew about Knowl View School and this was due to what had been said by Simon DANCZUK in Parliament, in addition to this the Paul FLOWERS story had broke and I said we need to know what we know.

I am absolutely convinced that there was a cover up which is why I went for an independent QC.

It is clear that from 1989 to 1990 they were aware that paedophile activity was going on, meaning RMBC, GMP and the health authority. They sent a health worker in to advise the lads how not to get aids which shows they knew what was going on but they did nothing to stop it.

There were lads from 4 authorities in Knowl View School, it was owned by Lancashire, Bolton, Oldham and Rochdale.

We had no computer records of the period 1989-1994 so it was all paperwork and a number of staff were dispatched to go through the paperwork in the town hall to find out what they had got.

Signature: C Lambert
2016

Signature witnessed by: