

<p>1 Wednesday, 24 October 2018 2 (10.00 am) 3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this 4 public hearing. Mr Sadd? 5 MR SADD: Chair, good morning, and good morning to members 6 of the panel. Before we hear evidence from Mr Brook, 7 chair, it is right to note that you have indicated that 8 in the past you have had a passing professional 9 acquaintance with Mr Brook. You consider that your 10 knowledge of Mr Brook does not cause you any difficulty 11 in conducting the hearings, nor does it affect your 12 independence or that of the panel. 13 Core participant legal representatives have been 14 informed of your professional acquaintance with 15 Mr Brook, and no objections have been raised. Assuming 16 that no core participants wish to make submissions on 17 this matter, I was going to proceed to call this 18 witness. 19 THE CHAIR: Please proceed. 20 MR SADD: Chair, as will be obvious from that, we are going 21 to hear evidence now from Stuart Brook. His statement 22 can be found at INQ002480. 23 MR STUART BROOK (sworn) 24 Examination by MR SADD 25 MR SADD: Mr Brook, it is not a situation that you will be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 used to, giving evidence. Your voice is a quiet one. 2 If you were able to approach the microphone to you so 3 that it can be picked up. I hope you don't mind me 4 saying that. 5 A. Not at all. 6 Q. You have provided a 97-page statement to the inquiry. 7 At the time that you prepared that statement, and when 8 you came to sign it, were you satisfied that what you 9 had set out there was the truth, as far as you can 10 remember? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. It's also right that you have provided a page of 13 corrections that you wanted to make to the statement. 14 I am not going to go through all those corrections now, 15 but the amendments will be made, and when your statement 16 is uploaded to the website over the next few days, that 17 will have been sorted out. 18 A. Thank you. 19 Q. I am not going to go through your statement line by 20 line, paragraph by paragraph. I am going to take you to 21 particular topics, to which I think you have been 22 alerted. As we do so together, we may also look at 23 documents that lie behind your statement and that you 24 have also been asked to comment on. 25 As I say, the panel have a copy of your statement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>
<p>1 and have a copy of the documents that lie behind your 2 statement. 3 You began working with Nottinghamshire 4 County Council in November 1992 as the deputy director 5 of Social Services, following a background in social 6 probation and mental health services? 7 A. (Witness nods). 8 Q. The deputy director was, as you say at paragraph 4.1 of 9 your statement, primarily focused on the implementation 10 of the incoming Community Care Act. It carried no 11 operational management responsibility for Children's 12 Services. You were in this role until 1994, when you 13 were appointed to the role of acting director of 14 Social Services in July 1994, after the resignation of 15 David White, from whom the inquiry has heard. 16 At this point, you accepted overall responsibility 17 for the commissioning and delivery of Social Services to 18 adults and children, and you were then offered the post 19 of director, which you occupied until January 2005? 20 A. That's true. 21 Q. So far, I have got things right? 22 A. Thank you. 23 Q. Would it be fair to say that when you took up the post, 24 as appears to be indicated by my summary, that your 25 focus was primarily on child protection concerns over</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>	<p>1 residential care issues? 2 A. That's true, yes. 3 Q. Should we, at this stage, properly distinguish between 4 Child Protection, as it was called and is still called 5 now, but looking at it in the '90s, which -- whether you 6 accept the definition I am going to give you -- 7 effectively was the provision of policies to protect 8 children in the family setting, on the one hand, and the 9 issues of safeguarding, which were policies protecting 10 children in care settings? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. Is that a fair distinction? 13 A. Yes, and I think it's fair to say that the focus of my 14 early years, really, was initially on the early stages 15 assessment and care management of young people in the 16 community requiring protection. 17 Q. Indeed, some of the documentation that lies behind your 18 statement relates very specifically to Child Protection? 19 A. It does. 20 Q. We have also heard evidence to the effect that Child 21 Protection policies that related to disclosures of abuse 22 were policies that the inquiry understands were 23 transposed into foster settings and residential care 24 settings where allegations were disclosed. Is that 25 right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. A refrain that one can pick up from your statement is</p> <p>3 how the poor standard of social service management and</p> <p>4 its impact on the provision to children in care, how</p> <p>5 poor that was during the first part of the 1990s. Is it</p> <p>6 fair of me to generalise one of the themes of your</p> <p>7 statement in that way?</p> <p>8 A. I think it's fair to generalise, in the sense that there</p> <p>9 was an absence of key processes, in terms of</p> <p>10 relationships between managers and staff, in terms of</p> <p>11 monitoring the work of staff and in terms of</p> <p>12 professional support to staff. I would have to say that</p> <p>13 the early reports from the -- for instance, the 1995</p> <p>14 report, which you may wish to come back to later, did</p> <p>15 compliment staff in Nottinghamshire on being very</p> <p>16 committed to the protection and safeguarding of children</p> <p>17 across the community, and also being well qualified in</p> <p>18 terms of fieldwork staff. So there were positive issues</p> <p>19 mentioned at the time, but I do acknowledge that there</p> <p>20 were systematic weaknesses in terms of management and</p> <p>21 processing the department.</p> <p>22 Q. My understanding of reading your statement is that those</p> <p>23 management issues, if I can put it that way, were far</p> <p>24 reaching at the point when you took up post initially as</p> <p>25 assistant director and then as acting director?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 A. I think we will be able to explore these in significant</p> <p>2 detail as the morning progresses but --</p> <p>3 Q. Do you agree with me, though, with my description as</p> <p>4 far reaching?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, far reaching.</p> <p>6 Q. Section 5 of your statement, please. This is page 3.</p> <p>7 You discuss the Social Services Committee. At</p> <p>8 paragraph 5.3, you say:</p> <p>9 "In residential care, many colleagues were</p> <p>10 unqualified and with limited residential childcare</p> <p>11 experience. The level of staff absence was</p> <p>12 unacceptable. The numbers of employees subject to</p> <p>13 disciplinary action was worryingly high. The members of</p> <p>14 the Social Services Committee were vigilant about</p> <p>15 workforce issues and took a critical but supportive</p> <p>16 approach to understanding these recruitment and</p> <p>17 retention issues, as well as encouraging initiatives to</p> <p>18 address the significant service risks."</p> <p>19 Then you go on to say some of this is set out in</p> <p>20 your statement.</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. The reference there to the numbers of employees subject</p> <p>23 to disciplinary action was worryingly high, at what</p> <p>24 point in the timeline of your appointments, both as</p> <p>25 acting director and subsequently as director, were they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>
<p>1 worryingly high?</p> <p>2 A. The problem of staff vacancies was immediate and</p> <p>3 considerable from the start, from the very start of my</p> <p>4 arrival at Nottinghamshire. I'm trying to say that I'm</p> <p>5 very much aware that that is an issue from the very --</p> <p>6 from the first day I arrived.</p> <p>7 Q. The issue of staff disciplinaries relating to conduct in</p> <p>8 children's homes, was that something that was maintained</p> <p>9 as a thread throughout your time as director?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, I see a significant thread of that issue,</p> <p>11 particularly through to the late 1990s. I did feel as</p> <p>12 though the department did begin to recover and become</p> <p>13 more stable towards the 1990s and into the 2000s.</p> <p>14 Q. 5.12, please, of your statement, page 4. You write</p> <p>15 there:</p> <p>16 "The task of delivering this extensive and diverse</p> <p>17 national change and development agenda was compounded in</p> <p>18 Nottinghamshire ..."</p> <p>19 I should say that you have set out, until we get to</p> <p>20 that paragraph, national changes that were taking place</p> <p>21 in legislation?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. And the fact that these had to be implemented under your</p> <p>24 directorship. You say:</p> <p>25 "The task of delivering this extensive and diverse</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>	<p>1 national change and development agenda was compounded in</p> <p>2 Nottinghamshire by the need to remedy deep historical</p> <p>3 and current service deficits and weaknesses in</p> <p>4 Children's Services."</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. What were the historical deficits?</p> <p>7 A. In terms of process, there was an issue of that training</p> <p>8 had failed for staff, and obviously this is a key issue,</p> <p>9 in terms of taking new agendas forward, that staff were</p> <p>10 prepared for these changes and that there was a strong</p> <p>11 deficit in training. I was conscious that, particularly</p> <p>12 within the children's safeguarding work, there had been</p> <p>13 evidence over a number of years that our response wasn't</p> <p>14 adequate, that we weren't keeping to statutory</p> <p>15 timescales, we weren't keeping to reviewed timescales</p> <p>16 for particular cases, and this was a long standing</p> <p>17 problem.</p> <p>18 Q. The reference there to "weaknesses in Children's</p> <p>19 Services", is that in the protection of children, so is</p> <p>20 it a child protection issue, or did it go wider than</p> <p>21 that?</p> <p>22 A. I believe it went across the board. The reason I say</p> <p>23 that is because we did have two significant reports,</p> <p>24 which you are aware of. In 1992, we had "As if they</p> <p>25 were our own" report, which is a review of residential</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 care in Nottinghamshire, which, as you know, drew 2 attention to significant shortcomings. We subsequently, 3 in residential care, had inspection reports with regard 4 to a particular residential facility, Clayfields, which 5 highlighted significant problems which had existed not 6 just at the time, but long before, in terms of poor 7 management and in terms of inappropriate staff 8 responses.</p> <p>9 With regard to fieldwork, that's social work and 10 local managers of social work services, there was 11 a report in 1994 called "Strong enough to care", which 12 was highly critical of basically the full range of 13 processes required to generate a safe service.</p> <p>14 Q. Looking back now, would it be your view -- what might 15 the inquiry understand -- that when you took up post, 16 were Children's Services at that point failing children 17 in the care of the county?</p> <p>18 A. I believe they were, and I believe there was significant 19 risk in the system.</p> <p>20 Q. When do you say -- and I know there is a lot of detail 21 in your statement --</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. -- and I don't mean to abridge that, but when do you say 24 that that started to change?</p> <p>25 A. It started to change immediately after "Strong enough to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 care". That was a severe shock to the department. It 2 had resulted in the loss of our director. He's 3 explained the circumstances of that to this hearing 4 previously. It was very, very clear that all of us at 5 every level had to put into place safer processes from 6 assessment to care for children.</p> <p>7 Q. We know that "Strong enough to care" related 8 specifically to this issue of child protection that 9 I have identified?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Do you think that such was the reaction to "Strong 12 enough to care" that issues to do with residential care 13 somehow came second?</p> <p>14 A. I think at that time that's probably fair to say. It 15 was a tremendous shock to the system. There was strong 16 public criticism. There was national government 17 interest in the department continuously for 12 months 18 and we had a position where we had significant numbers 19 of cases not being managed safely, and we also were 20 facing up to the problem of unallocated child protection 21 work, which means that we had quite a number of children 22 who were receiving no protection at all. So it's 23 perhaps not surprising, but it is regrettable, that, 24 sadly, the focus had to be, at that early stage, on 25 those community-based child protection services.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>
<p>1 Q. So it wouldn't be unfair to say that residential and 2 foster care may have been overlooked in certain aspects?</p> <p>3 A. It didn't receive the same priority.</p> <p>4 Q. It did receive the same priority?</p> <p>5 A. It didn't. It didn't receive the same priority.</p> <p>6 Q. It didn't.</p> <p>7 A. I would want to say -- sorry, I will stop there. There 8 may be a question about that later.</p> <p>9 Q. In his evidence to the inquiry, David White noticed or 10 alerted the inquiry to what he thought was a breakdown 11 at the time that he was in post between police and 12 social service relationships.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. This was specifically in the wake of Broxtowe, obviously 15 before you took up your role?</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. And that he thought that this breakdown affected the 18 investigation of child sexual abuse. At paragraph 10.4 19 of your statement, you refer to those historic 20 tensions -- this is page 20. To help you, I will read 21 what you say there: 22 "I understood there were some historic tensions 23 between Social Services and the police colleagues in 24 Nottinghamshire." 25 You're talking with reference to the joint protocol</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>	<p>1 signed with the chief constable?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. In what way -- I should ask you two questions, in fact. 4 Were those tensions still evident when you took up post?</p> <p>5 A. I can't say too much about how they worked at front-line 6 level. My understanding was that, even through the 7 Broxtowe case, the relationships between police and 8 social workers at front-line level did hold together. 9 It wasn't a complete breakdown. I do understand there 10 were severe relationship issues at a more senior level, 11 and although I -- I clearly remember there had also been 12 a change in the chief constable as well; his deputy had 13 taken the job. All I can say to today's hearing is that 14 he was an excellent chief constable who put a lot of 15 effort into working with Social Services and gave me 16 personally a lot of time as a new director, so I'm 17 grateful for his support. But relationships did 18 improve.</p> <p>19 Q. Those historic tensions that I have quoted to you that 20 you set out at 10.4, do you believe these impacted on 21 the work of your department during your tenure?</p> <p>22 A. If they existed, I believe that the relationship with 23 the police increased quite rapidly, and I had no sense, 24 even over the first year, that those tensions were 25 continuing to a significant degree.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 Q. 5.14 of your statement, please, this is page 4. At the 2 bottom of page 4, you describe the change in the 3 structure of the Social Services Committee. 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. Going over the page, you set out what that change 6 amounted to, and you say at 5.16: 7 "... the change to the cabinet process, and my 8 distancing from the scrutiny process, was a point at 9 which I became extensively less comfortable in my role." 10 We will come on to that in a moment. Do you believe 11 the change in the configuration of the committee led to 12 less-informed decision making on children's social care 13 policy? 14 A. I think it changed the issues that were considered. The 15 member roll became more strategic, in the sense that it 16 looked at issues and wider policy, it reviewed the best 17 arrangements for providing services in terms of the best 18 value review group that came together and it certainly 19 did explore services in other parts of the country as 20 well, to try to strengthen arrangements in 21 Nottinghamshire. So I'm not saying that there were no 22 strengths in that process. I think the issue that I was 23 concerned about was that I'd always worked with 24 a dedicated and specific group of members who had 25 a particular interest in Social Services and who had,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 over the years, built up a lot of experience and were 2 quite sensitive to these complex issues and I felt that 3 that got lost in the process. 4 So some people will say that the new arrangements 5 were necessary. I personally felt as though that direct 6 relationship between the committee and the director and 7 the rest of the department was a significant loss when 8 we were going through such challenging times. 9 Q. Can you give any examples of the practical consequence 10 of that change, in terms of what you're describing? So 11 there's that loss of what appears to be an immediacy of 12 involvement between the committee, on the one hand, and 13 its officers, on the other. 14 A. Yes. Obviously we were trying to put new processes into 15 place to compensate for these differences, but I clearly 16 remember that when the Social Services Committee was 17 running originally, we had spokespersons from each of 18 the political parties who took a particular interest in 19 Social Services. They were well known to the 20 departmental managers, they understood the issues, they 21 had been involved over a number of years. 22 We also had chairs with significant Social Services 23 experience, and the chance to explore issues together in 24 the committee, which was a tight-knit group of elected 25 members who were very well informed, is something that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>
<p>1 I began to miss. 2 Q. Can we turn, then, to an associated issue, which is the 3 reporting on staff disciplinaries to the committee. You 4 deal with this at various paragraphs -- paragraphs 6, 5 9.7, 9.10 to 9.11 and then further on, 27E, 29D and 6 56.1. I want to go, first, please -- I'm not going to 7 go to all of those paragraphs -- to page 14 of your 8 statement. Really, through from pages 14 to 16, you 9 deal with the reporting information that was provided 10 from staff disciplinary investigations to the 11 Social Services Committee. At paragraph 6.5, you say 12 that information was provided to councillors in two 13 ways: by reporting disciplinaries and suspensions to the 14 Social Service Committee and through occasional review 15 reports to the committee and its Client Services 16 Subcommittee? 17 A. That's true. 18 Q. At paragraph 6.9, you say that oral reports were 19 frequently the mode of reporting? 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. Mr Brook, was there any distinction between 22 disciplinaries which were reported orally at the time 23 you were in post and those which were set out in written 24 report? 25 A. Difference in what sense?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>	<p>1 Q. Difference, for instance, had an assessment been made of 2 the seriousness of a particular situation so that it 3 meant this was going to be in writing rather than put 4 orally? 5 A. No, the issues were very similar across both. It was 6 just a different style of reporting about the similar 7 issues. 8 Q. So the inquiry should read no significance in the fact 9 that some may have been written and some were oral? 10 A. No. 11 Q. Can we go, please, to NSC000127. This is at tab 3 of 12 the first volume of your bundle. This is a report to 13 the director of Social Services, disciplinary processes 14 within the department. We can see it is dated 15 20 October 1999. It's addressed to the social -- sorry, 16 I said "to the director", I meant of the director of 17 Social Services. It's addressed to the Social Services 18 Committee. It looks at disciplinaries held between 19 1 April 1998 and 31 March 1999. 37 cases. 30 involved 20 suspension. There are no details about what gave rise 21 to those disciplinaries. 22 But if we go, please, to page 3 of the document, and 23 paginated page 3 in the inquiry document, we go to 24 paragraph 2.6.5, the report refers there to two 25 full-time investigative officers who were now deployed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 in carrying out investigations, investigative 2 investigations. You say that these had improved the 3 quality of investigation reports "avoiding many of 4 the problems that were previously experienced at the 5 point of discipline hearings ... cases would fail at the 6 stage of a hearing due to the inadequacy of 7 the investigative work." 8 What the inquiry understands is that previous 9 practice had been for line managers to undertake such 10 investigations. 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. As you point out here, this had impacted on the quality 13 of those investigations. 14 This general review, would it have included 15 disciplinarys into allegations of sexual abuse of 16 children by residential staff? So does it encompass 17 that type of -- 18 A. Yes, I would think so, yes. 19 Q. What were the problems, as you understood them to have 20 been? 21 A. In general? Partly to do with the structure of 22 the department. The department was organised around 23 nine districts -- two in the city; seven in the county. 24 Each one had its own management team, a local district 25 manager, supported by a number of service managers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 Prior to the appointment of the investigative officers, 2 the individual investigations would have predominantly 3 taken place through the service managers and then 4 supported by their district managers. That was useful, 5 in the sense that these were people who were local and 6 who knew the services and had direct managerial 7 responsibility for that. 8 The problem that emerged was that, because it was 9 nine different districts, there were different standards 10 of performance, there were different outcomes, and there 11 was a lack of consistency across the whole department. 12 I think it's also fair to say that, with changing 13 legislation, some of the department were making 14 judgments on a different basis to other parts, and we 15 felt that what we needed to do, in terms of improving 16 outcomes for children, in terms of better reviewing, in 17 terms of making sure that we'd operated proper process 18 for staff, was that we needed to have more consistency, 19 and we did that partly -- I won't say wholly -- by 20 appointing these dedicated specialist staff who could 21 then develop the experience in doing this work and 22 improve the quality of the work. 23 Q. Indeed, at tab 14 of the bundle -- again, we don't need 24 to go to it -- there is a detailed document on 25 investigative officers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>
<p>1 Where disciplinarys failed into allegations against 2 staff for abuse of children, would you know whether the 3 complainant would be told of the outcome? 4 A. It would be an expectation, but I can't say I've got the 5 evidence of that. 6 Q. Should the inquiry be concerned that if failures were as 7 a result of a lack of proper process, an inconsistent 8 application of how things should be conducted, that 9 there would have been some cases which ought to have 10 resulted in different outcomes? 11 A. I think so. 12 Q. We know, because we have discussed, that the 13 Social Services Committee would be informed of 14 disciplinarys. From your experience, did the committee 15 take any proactive approach to find out more about 16 issues of child sexual abuse in residential care? 17 A. They were aware of the issue of child sexual abuse in 18 residential care from a whole range of directions, so 19 they did take a proactive interest in issues and 20 problems, and particular cases which hadn't been 21 satisfactorily dealt with; also, in terms of the content 22 of the staff disciplinarys and the way that staff had 23 behaved. So they were interested and supportive, but 24 I don't think that this was perhaps the most helpful 25 process, in terms of them learning about it. It tended</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>	<p>1 to be an issue that -- as I mentioned in my statement, 2 an issue that was discussed at the end of the meeting. 3 I think it deserved a greater profile. If I was doing 4 the job now, I would do something about that. 5 Q. Did you ever get a sense, Mr Brook, that the committee 6 were not keen on hearing what might be described as 7 difficult truths about how children were being managed 8 in residential care? 9 A. I wouldn't say that. I never found the committee 10 anything more than committed and interested, as long as 11 their attention had been drawn to it by people like 12 myself. 13 Q. Can we go back to your statement, please. We are going 14 to look at page 13. Here you deal with the issue of 15 trade union involvement -- 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. -- in staff disciplinarys. This you discuss at 18 paragraph 5.62 at the top of the page there, please. 19 You say that the relationships between the trade unions 20 and management, in the early to late 1990s, could be 21 exceptionally difficult. At 5.63, you talk of 22 the culture of opposition lasted through the mid '90s, 23 "and in my view delayed progress". Do you have any view 24 on whether this culture of opposition impacted on the 25 delivery of childcare services?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 A. It absolutely did. 2 Q. It did? 3 A. Yes. 4 Q. In what immediate practical ways did it do so? 5 A. You will see evidence through the individual cases of 6 particular responses from individuals whereby, quite 7 rightly, the unions wanted to represent the interests of 8 staff, but probably that interest was pursued so 9 energetically that it was at the expense of putting the 10 child first in terms of analysing situations and 11 responding to them. 12 Q. Indeed, we are going to look at a case in detail next. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. So should we understand that that culture of opposition 15 included the trade union role within employee appeals 16 against disciplinary? 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. It did. 19 A. I would want to say now, though, that I am -- I was 20 pleased with the fact that the relationships with the 21 trade unions and industrial relations did significantly 22 improve over the next few years and across the decade, 23 and you will see reference later in the report to 24 positive relationships and positive attitudes, and 25 I would want to stress that now, lest it looks like I'm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 being unduly critical at this stage. 2 Q. Before we move on to a very specific case, do you know 3 whether there was a practice within the council not to 4 pursue disciplinary cases if there was no further action 5 arising from a police investigation? 6 A. I think that was one of the issues that I mentioned in 7 terms of change in legislation, that people who had been 8 involved in the department a long time were probably -- 9 probably believed it was -- probably gave undue weight 10 to the outcome of criminal investigations in the 11 disciplinary. I do -- as you can see from various 12 reports through my submission, you will see that 13 position changing across the '90s, but there was that 14 tension, certainly in the early '90s, where people were 15 still hanging on to the old test. 16 Q. We are going to look then at a very specific case in 17 which the trade unions are involved. This is in 18 response to allegations of sexual abuse made against 19 NO-F162 and NO-F161 and the concerns that were raised by 20 an assistant director, Sandra Taylor, who carried out an 21 investigation. If we go to page 46 of your statement, 22 please, through to page 52 you deal with this. 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. I'd like to take you first to a particular discipline 25 case against NO-F162 who worked at Wollaton House.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>
<p>1 Allegations of child sexual abuse made against him. 2 Suspended on 1 October 1993. Resigned in December 1994 3 before the final conclusion of the disciplinary hearing 4 and his eventual conviction for a physical assault on 5 a child on 19 January 1996. 6 I'm going to take you to a memo sent to you and 7 others by Rod Jones, on 30 January 1996, in relation to 8 this case. It is tab 20 of your bundle. It is document 9 NSC000473, please. 10 At page 3 of the document, please, we see under the 11 heading "Issues for staff recruitment, selection and 12 disciplinary processes", that he sets out a variety of 13 outcomes. There had been inadequate efforts to obtain 14 proper references during F162's recruitment. His 15 referees hadn't been questioned about his conduct when 16 allegations were made. There was no focus on the wider 17 risk, and he deals with, where a child withdraws 18 a serious allegation, as the complainant had in this 19 case, the department should get a report from their 20 social worker or the officer in charge as to their 21 assessment of the withdrawal and assess what might have 22 influenced it. In particular, at the top of page 4, we 23 see at paragraph 4: 24 "Where a member of staff resigns before the 25 disciplinary panel concludes, that panel should still</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>	<p>1 meet, decide, record and act upon the department's 2 position about that person, on the basis of the 3 available information. This should include managerial 4 decisions relevant to future applications and 5 requests ... 6 "There are longer-term and child protection reasons 7 for concluding the department's decision making -- even 8 if this may not be required for strictly personnel 9 reasons." 10 Can you remember, in your role as director, what 11 your response to this memo would have been, 12 understanding, of course, that you're taking an 13 overarching view? 14 A. Yes. I mean, first of all, I thought it was a useful 15 memo because it did actually identify the particular 16 issues, and it also identified tasks for people to -- 17 suggested ways of taking this forward. I can't, going 18 that far back, recollect the detailed discussions that 19 took place, but I would have expected that I would have 20 discussed this with the key players identified in this 21 report, or their line managers, with a view to these 22 suggestions, recommendations or issues being explored or 23 taken forward. 24 Q. Can we then go to the next case, F161. This was a case 25 in which there had been a joint investigation into</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 allegations of child sexual abuse against a member of 2 the staff. The member of staff was acquitted at trial 3 on 31 October 1994. An investigation was carried out by 4 the council. F161 was dismissed but successfully 5 appealed against this. You deal with your recollection 6 of the case at page 48 of your statement under 7 paragraph 31, do you have that two-thirds of the way 8 down, "Allegations of sexual abuse"?</p> <p>9 A. I do, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Assistant director Sandra Taylor chaired the 11 disciplinary hearing --</p> <p>12 A. She did.</p> <p>13 Q. -- at the conclusion of which she wrote an eight-page 14 memo to you. This is what we are going to look at now. 15 This is NSC000189_042. This is in tab 21, Mr Brook, of 16 your bundle. Do you have it?</p> <p>17 A. I do.</p> <p>18 Q. On the first page, she writes that she has come to be 19 informed of a variety of issues which "give me cause for 20 grave concern as to the welfare and safety of children 21 in the care of the authority. My concern is that this 22 potentially appears to be the case."</p> <p>23 If you will forgive me, I am going to read out what 24 those concerns were: poor knowledge and adherence with 25 policies and procedures amongst staff; long-serving</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 staff were dismissive of the need for retraining; policy 2 on contact between Social Services staff and children 3 outside work was not adhered to in any respect; 4 a personal friend of F161 being given access to young 5 people without being police checked or vetted, he was 6 subsequently arrested and charged with sexual abuse; 7 residential staff were confused as to what might be 8 construed as appropriate physical contact; policies 9 didn't appear to be known, observed or understood; 10 24 members of staff had given evidence in support of 11 F161, despite nobody having directly observed his 12 calibre or competency; one of the complainants had 13 disclosed abuse on three occasions before, but this had 14 not been properly recorded or investigated.</p> <p>15 At page 48, please, paragraph 5, you can see there 16 she sets out the trade union position. We can see that 17 she refers to an attack on her as chair of 18 the hearing -- this is four lines down:</p> <p>19 "The grounds for the attack were on the 20 'child-centred' approach of the hearing and my 21 questioning of residential social workers as to their 22 knowledge of [guidance] and the Child Protection 23 Procedures. This was construed as placing 'the 24 interests of the child' above 'the interests of 25 the residential social workers' and therefore contrary</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>
<p>1 to natural justice."</p> <p>2 You say at paragraph 31, page 49 of your statement, 3 that the content of the memo from Ms Taylor came "as no 4 surprise, but the intensity did". You also say that in 5 your view Ms Taylor had raised "legitimate and important 6 concerns and was right to highlight the shortcomings of 7 the service".</p> <p>8 You were head of Social Services at the time, 9 Mr Brook. You say that this came as no surprise. Given 10 that you say that, and that she was right to raise the 11 shortcomings of the service, should the inquiry take the 12 view -- or should the inquiry assume that the attitudes 13 reported here were representative of systemic issues in 14 residential care in the county at the time?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Could the panel conclude that residential care, if that 17 is the case, was in an abject state and children were at 18 risk?</p> <p>19 A. I think we discussed this earlier on, that the general 20 analysis was that it was in a very difficult situation, 21 a very poor state.</p> <p>22 Q. I just want to remind myself of the date of the memo, 23 and I think it is 1996. If we could go back. 1995, 24 forgive me, it says at the top there.</p> <p>25 A. It is.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>	<p>1 Q. I understand entirely that you had only been in post for 2 a short space of time, but what this reflects is what 3 you say was a systemic approach in residential care?</p> <p>4 A. In my view, it reflects many of the issues that were 5 raised in the chief executive's review of residential 6 homes in 1992.</p> <p>7 Q. But this is three years on?</p> <p>8 A. It is three years on. That's absolutely right. So many 9 of the issues were current, but also the review 10 discovered incidents and responses going back over 11 several years.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you understand why some people listening to this 13 inquiry, 23 years on, may view what she is setting out 14 there, and the litany that I set out, as shocking?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. At paragraph 21 of your statement, this is page 50, you 17 say this:</p> <p>18 "Whilst clearly recognising the management and staff 19 deficits highlighted in Sandra Taylor's memorandum, 20 I did feel that the authority and management team still 21 had significant work to do to demonstrate embedded staff 22 guidance, supervision and personal development 23 opportunities. These and other matters, in my view, 24 needed to be addressed to ensure that staff were clearer 25 on their personal and professional responsibilities and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 boundaries at work." 2 Were these issues addressed in your time as 3 director? 4 A. I believe so. 5 Q. What gives you that belief? 6 A. We are talking here about the full range of management 7 responsibilities for anybody working in the department. 8 I'll just pick up a couple of issues. First of all, 9 some of this is, in my view, to do with poor 10 appointments, processes, the significant evidence of 11 inadequate take up of references, there are issues about 12 the process of interviews and what sort of issues got 13 covered in interviews. There are problems -- I could go 14 on for a long time. I just don't how much detail to 15 give. 16 Q. I will tell you what I may do. I am going to ask you 17 a question which goes directly to an issue -- 18 A. Okay. 19 Q. -- which is, presumably, the implementation of 20 the processes that you are describing would occur over 21 time? 22 A. Yes, they would. 23 Q. Presumably, the changes in relation to the way staff 24 were managed and the way that cultures had become 25 embedded would take time?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. But you and I have recognised that at the time of this 3 report being written to you, children clearly were at 4 risk? 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. How was that risk met? 7 A. First of all, through training. We did -- 8 Q. No, sorry, I haven't made my question clear to you. We 9 know that those issues take time. 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. But we are looking at a situation in a home, albeit it 12 was a secure home, or partly it was a secure home -- 13 A. That's right. 14 Q. -- in which you have recognised that the provision of 15 care to children was abject, to use my phrase. 16 Therefore, one can conclude that at that point in time 17 children were at risk. What immediate action was taken 18 to meet that risk? 19 A. That particular home, because of these concerns, and 20 because of concerns raised about historical problems 21 over the past two or three years, that was subject to an 22 inspection by the Social Services Inspectorate in 23 a triannual review in 1995. In the light of this type 24 of information -- and I will say "this type", because 25 this is one particular memo about a particular case, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>
<p>1 I do want to agree that the issues it identifies are 2 general problems beyond that particular case. The home 3 was considered untenable, this position unacceptable. 4 The home was closed. All staff were subject to external 5 review. We did bring independent people in to actually 6 look at the competencies of staff, the attitudes of 7 staff and their suitability for work in residential 8 care. And there was no option. It was so clear, this 9 home had to close down. It was closed down -- 10 Q. But did you -- 11 A. -- and subsequently reprovided. 12 Q. Did you test or did you issue a memo that the staff in 13 every home that was taking children in residential care 14 should be appraised and reviewed? 15 A. No, not in every home, no, not at that stage. 16 Q. You didn't think, having read this, that that was 17 necessary, given what you have told the inquiry, that 18 this culture was representative of residential care in 19 the county? 20 A. I think it's fair to say the issue of attitudes, 21 inadequate processes, et cetera, risk in residential 22 care, was known from 1992. I came into post and we 23 started trying to put the necessary processes in place, 24 which do take time to actually restore the proper 25 management and review arrangements. That did take time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>	<p>1 My immediate reaction here was that I was doing that, we 2 were putting those in place, they had to be -- we had to 3 be -- to give that some time, but with proper 4 investments that things would improve. The particular 5 reaction, the immediate reaction, was around the 6 particular home itself. 7 Q. I understand that and you have helped us with that. To 8 what extent in trying to introduce changes were you met 9 with defiance? 10 A. I don't want to put responsibility for failure to make 11 changes on the staff attitudes or defiance. There was 12 this issue -- I called it perpetual negotiation -- from 13 certain colleagues in the department at every level. 14 Everybody wanted to negotiate everything. That took 15 some dealing with, so I don't pretend it was easy. But 16 I do believe that certainly within the management team, 17 and across many staff in the department, people knew 18 that we had to change. 19 Q. Can we turn, please, next to issues relating to 20 Beechwood. This deal with at paragraph 22 of your 21 statement. I will find you the page reference. This is 22 page 36, please. Do you have it? 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. You describe the monthly community homes reports that 25 were provided to the committee and previously to the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 director of Social Services. But you say you had 2 stopped being copied in by the time you took up your 3 post. You say you don't know why that is. The reports 4 relevant to your period are from page 38 onwards of 5 NSC000393. It is in tab 5 of your bundle. Can we go to 6 page 38, please. Do you have that? 7 A. Yes, I do. 8 Q. We can see "Community homes -- monthly inspections". We 9 go to the bottom of the page, please, and we can see: 10 "Admin -- a copy of this form to be sent to: 11 "(1) Director of Social Services (committee 12 support)." 13 From reading your statement, you want the panel to 14 understand that, actually, it went straight to the 15 committee, you wouldn't see these reports? 16 A. No. 17 Q. In what circumstances would any issues arising out of 18 these reports be escalated to you? 19 A. I would have expected that they would have been 20 escalated not necessarily to me directly, but certainly 21 to the assistant director if there was any comment in 22 the report about some significant harm to a child. 23 Q. At paragraph 22.11, page 37 of your report, you describe 24 yourself as an occasional visitor to Beechwood and you 25 explain that the head of what you call the departmental</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 inspections team, who was accountable to you, would be 2 the person carrying out the visits that we have just 3 seen on screen. The departmental inspections -- 4 A. Sorry, forgive me. The visits on the screen were 5 undertaken by the local service manager who had 6 responsibility for the direct management of Beechwood. 7 The inspectorate visits were separate from that. 8 Q. That was the question I was going to ask you next: the 9 departmental inspections team. It may be something that 10 I have missed in all the evidence that has come before 11 the inquiry. But was there an actual unit within the 12 department -- 13 A. There was. It was called the Service Standards Unit and 14 it had staff who visited residential homes for older 15 people and children's homes. 16 Q. Did that unit provide periodic reports? 17 A. Yes, it did. It provided overview reports to elected 18 members at the end of each year and obviously I had 19 planned contact with the head of inspections throughout 20 the year. That was before the government were appointed 21 as external inspectors of our homes, which is the 22 present situation. 23 Q. When had that team been set up? 24 A. I think it was set up in the very early '90s. May 25 I just comment, it covered all the residential homes,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>
<p>1 but for some reason did not cover Amberdale or 2 Clayfields, the secure unit, presumably because of 3 external government inspection. 4 Q. Would you or the head of the departmental inspections 5 team ever visit the children at the unit? 6 A. They visited -- I can't remember the frequency of 7 visiting, but they did visit, yes. 8 Q. Would you do so? 9 A. I didn't visit Beechwood regularly. I can only remember 10 going to Beechwood on one or two occasions. My tendency 11 was to visit residential homes when there were 12 significant issues arising around the home to support 13 the assistant director in whatever issues he was trying 14 to carry through. 15 Q. So your visit would have depended on the assistant 16 director alerting you to an issue that he or she wanted 17 resolved or your input on? 18 A. Some of the times, I did do occasional -- I did do 19 occasional visits to pop in and show support and show an 20 interest and try to talk to different people, but my 21 time was mainly spent on focused issues when we had 22 significant difficulties around the home. 23 Q. Given what we have spoken about, about this culture -- 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. -- and systemic issues that we have described --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. -- would you ever take the opportunity to speak to 3 children yourself in residential care? 4 A. Yes, certainly. 5 Q. Did you do so at Beechwood, can you remember? 6 A. I can't remember the details of Beechwood. I can 7 remember specific situations in other homes where I did. 8 Q. Were children given free access to you -- 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. -- to speak to you? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. Would you see those children on their own or would there 13 be a member of staff? 14 A. I think I tended to see them on their own, but 15 I wouldn't have ruled out -- my memory is a little hazy 16 on this, but I wouldn't have ruled out the possibility 17 I spoke to young people individually as well. It's 18 something that I did enjoy doing. 19 Q. Can we move, please, to foster care. This is in your 20 role in responding to allegations and circumstances in 21 which you would be informed of allegations. You deal 22 with this at page 39 of your statement, please, where 23 you were asked to look at seven different cases where 24 allegations were made against foster carers between 1995 25 and 2000. In respect of six of those, you say you can't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 recollect being informed. In respect of allegations 2 against NO-F127, which led to a prosecution 3 in March 2000, you say you have no detailed recollection 4 but you would have expected to be briefed. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Can you say now, having had to give thought to this, 7 having put this together, whether in fact you were 8 briefed? 9 A. No. I think it's highly likely that I was. 10 Q. As director of Social Services, do you think or have you 11 paused to think as to whether or not you should have had 12 greater oversight in relation to allegations of sexual 13 abuse in foster care? 14 A. I think -- I'm sure, knowing what I know now, that 15 I would arrange for a better system of issues being 16 escalated to myself and that I would have also expected 17 a stronger -- I would have wanted to have seen 18 a stronger system of briefing elected members as well, 19 and we could have found processes to do that. 20 Q. Page 84, please, of your statement, paragraph 53.2. 21 There you talk about the positive performance of 22 the fostering service during your time as director. As 23 you may or may not know, the inquiry has heard from 24 complainants who say they were sexually abused in foster 25 care in the 1990s and 2000s?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. The inquiry also has documentation of investigations 3 throughout this period into sexual abuse in foster care, 4 so investigations into the foster carers and to the 5 allegations, some of which led to deregistrations. How 6 should one reconcile the foster service being "an 7 exemplar to other authorities" with the fact that, 8 throughout that period, as we have looked at together, 9 allegations and investigations were being carried out? 10 A. This is rather embarrassing for me today. I do have to 11 say that is a mistake which I failed to spot. 12 Q. What's a mistake? 13 A. When I wrote this, I think -- I'm sure that I was 14 thinking of the adoption service rather than the foster 15 service. The adoption service was an exemplar. It did 16 get particular responses. I do apologise for that. 17 That is an error, and I hope you can accept that. 18 Q. What you are telling the inquiry is that this doesn't 19 apply to the foster service? 20 A. That's a mistake. 21 Q. That's a mistake. Can we go back, then, please -- 22 forgive me for the chopping and changing -- 23 to paragraph 28 of your statement on page 43. This is 24 in relation to harmful sexual behaviour between 25 children. At paragraph 28, you say simply that you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>
<p>1 can't confirm that all incidents of harmful sexual 2 behaviour between children were brought to your 3 attention, but that you do remember some individual 4 discussion with the assistant director about the steps 5 that were being taken to respond to and manage this, and 6 you set that out there. This suggests that you knew 7 about some cases? 8 A. Yes. I can't remember the details, but I do remember 9 some discussions, yes. 10 Q. Do you understand, or can you remember, why it was it 11 would have been brought to your attention? Do you have 12 any recollection of that? 13 A. I can't remember the exact circumstances. 14 Q. You say further, at paragraph 28 at subparagraph (b), 15 that you can't recall any specific procedures for 16 responding to such allegations? 17 A. No. 18 Q. In the light of the -- 19 A. May I clarify that? 20 Q. Sure. 21 A. I am aware, through looking at various procedures, about 22 issues around investigation and support when these sort 23 of circumstances occurred. I think what I'm trying to 24 say there is, I do remember being -- the assistant 25 director wanting to discuss this issue, wanting to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>	<p>1 discuss strategies to respond, but it was more about the 2 management of the situation in the residential home than 3 it was about a procedural issue. So it was about -- 4 that situation was about the residential home itself and 5 how to manage those particular concerns. 6 Q. When you say that you can't recall if there were any 7 specific procedures, should one understand that to mean 8 that there were none or you can't remember if there 9 were? 10 A. I can't remember. 11 Q. You were asked by the inquiry to consider a number of 12 cases individually, a whole series -- 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. -- and, with each of those cases, and the accumulation 15 of the cases, whether consideration was given more 16 broadly to the fact. If we go, please, to page 46 of 17 your statement, paragraph 29F, where you recite the 18 question put to you, whether each case was considered 19 individually. Do you have that? 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. You say at point 6 under F: 22 "The personnel department did collate an overview of 23 disciplinary action in response to 'Children in public 24 care' ..." 25 That was a general government publication; is that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 right?</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. "... and some attempt was made to improve the</p> <p>4 intelligence available from the then available child</p> <p>5 protection information system."</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Did you ever get to see the overview carried out?</p> <p>8 A. I think the overview that was reported to elected</p> <p>9 members, if I remember, was actually very broad, about</p> <p>10 numbers of disciplinaries. It didn't actually cover the</p> <p>11 detailed circumstances.</p> <p>12 Q. But having seen that overview and presumably before it</p> <p>13 went to committee, you would have been aware of it?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. What was your response to what was set out in that</p> <p>16 overview?</p> <p>17 A. I didn't make any particular additional response to that</p> <p>18 overview, other than the general management strategy</p> <p>19 that we were operating at the time, which was about</p> <p>20 improving the information systems around all of this.</p> <p>21 Part of the issue facing us at that particular time was</p> <p>22 that we had different childcare information systems for</p> <p>23 different reasons. So we would have a client index, we</p> <p>24 would have a register of children on the Child</p> <p>25 Protection Register and there was a third separate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 register. There was no one place where you could</p> <p>2 actually take an overview as to what was happening</p> <p>3 across the department by referring to one system. So we</p> <p>4 decided at that stage that that needed attention and</p> <p>5 that those systems needed to be brought together, and</p> <p>6 that was subsequently overtaken in the early 2000s by</p> <p>7 the implementation of a very modern children's</p> <p>8 information system which was, at that time, and is no</p> <p>9 longer, state of the art.</p> <p>10 Q. We have looked together at the Sandra Taylor memo in</p> <p>11 1995.</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Here we have looked at, albeit very cursorily,</p> <p>14 I understand that, Mr Brook, a series of individual</p> <p>15 cases. You agreed with me that the Sandra Taylor memo</p> <p>16 reflected systemic issues. Would it be fair to say that</p> <p>17 what we have looked at just now, with the qualification</p> <p>18 that I provided, was a further reflection of systemic</p> <p>19 issues, or were these being treated simply as individual</p> <p>20 cases?</p> <p>21 A. I never would have viewed any of these as individual</p> <p>22 cases. I believed that the systemic problems were deep</p> <p>23 and long standing and it took us some time, some years,</p> <p>24 to actually make the movement that I would have</p> <p>25 expected. It took me longer than I would have hoped,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>
<p>1 but we did try to improve our management arrangements</p> <p>2 and systems around that.</p> <p>3 Q. During your time as director, on the information</p> <p>4 available to the inquiry, there are about</p> <p>5 15 disciplinaries relating to sexual abuse allegations</p> <p>6 of children in care. Would the inquiry be entitled to</p> <p>7 assume that you would have been made aware of all of</p> <p>8 those?</p> <p>9 A. I would expect to be aware of most of them. I wouldn't</p> <p>10 want to say "all", but, yes, significant numbers. The</p> <p>11 exception would be the foster parents, where I have no</p> <p>12 recollection at all of being briefed about those. But</p> <p>13 with regard to residential homes, I had an assistant</p> <p>14 director who shared the next office to me and did report</p> <p>15 to me regularly on issues arising.</p> <p>16 Q. Again, would you see that number, albeit you were in</p> <p>17 post until 2005 -- is that right?</p> <p>18 A. Mmm.</p> <p>19 Q. Would you see that number again as reflective of</p> <p>20 systemic issues?</p> <p>21 A. Yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Can we look, please, now at an entirely different topic.</p> <p>23 This is in relation to publicity. This is at page 19 of</p> <p>24 your statement, please, and something that you address</p> <p>25 between paragraphs 9.14 and 9.15. So at 9.14 you say:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>	<p>1 "Potential publicity issues were discussed with the</p> <p>2 communications officer in the chief executive</p> <p>3 department ... As one of the key managers likely to be</p> <p>4 involved in media matters, I was, from time to time,</p> <p>5 involved in this process."</p> <p>6 You say at page 38 -- don't go to it, I will tell</p> <p>7 you what you say, and you will have to trust me on that.</p> <p>8 You say at 26.4:</p> <p>9 "There was no general departmental policy on, or</p> <p>10 expectation of, reporting individual cases to myself,</p> <p>11 except when matters might attract publicity and public</p> <p>12 interest. I would at that stage inform the chief</p> <p>13 executive, chair and spokespersons of minority political</p> <p>14 parties.</p> <p>15 "There was no policy or expectation of reporting</p> <p>16 individual cases to myself".</p> <p>17 We have looked at the issues of individual cases and</p> <p>18 looking at cases as a whole.</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Do you think there should have been some form of policy</p> <p>21 that required you to be notified of cases or at least</p> <p>22 required you to be notified of the number of cases on</p> <p>23 a periodic review?</p> <p>24 A. If I had my time again, which I won't, I would have</p> <p>25 implemented such a system. I wouldn't want to prescribe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 one today, but, yes, some system whereby there was 2 escalation to myself, where there was an overview in 3 terms of numbers, and I also would want to suggest that 4 that should have been, and could have been, available to 5 elected members and, yes, I would do that. 6 Q. During the course of your appointment, did you ever pick 7 up or identify any tensions that existed that prevented 8 action being taken in respect of disclosure of abuse of 9 children in care in order to avoid adverse publicity? 10 A. No. 11 Q. Can we go, please, to the training and recruitment of 12 residential care staff, page 26 of your statement, 13 paragraph 20.5, please. You say that the two reports 14 that you mention, "Strong enough to care" and "As if 15 they were our own" and indeed a Social Services 16 Inspectorate report in 1994, you say that these showed 17 that there was "a crying need for staff competencies to 18 better match the complex and challenging tasks 19 undertaken by fieldwork and residential care 20 colleagues", and that this included a need for training. 21 The inquiry, as you might imagine, is now replete 22 with evidence that this was a problem throughout the 23 1980s and 1990s, and there was evidence last week from 24 someone who worked at Beechwood in the early 2000s that 25 very few staff were trained that they worked with,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 although I appreciate that was within the confines of 2 the city council. 3 By the time you left in 2005, what was the state of 4 health of training for those working in residential care 5 in the county? 6 A. I wouldn't want to take personal credit for it, but 7 I think it was significantly better. I would be willing 8 to talk about how the strategy worked and how staff were 9 engaged with that, but that's perhaps a lot of detail. 10 Q. It's detail that's set out in your statement. 11 A. It is, but I provide evidence of a training strategy for 12 1999/2000 which sets out the process which by training 13 plans were developed for the year and the way in which 14 individuals were engaged in that and also the particular 15 training areas that we covered, and I think you can 16 recognise from that that these were significantly 17 related to the issue of child abuse and the problems in 18 residential homes. 19 Q. Can we go then, please, to NSC000929. Mr Brook, that's 20 tab 11 of your bundle. This is a report by you to the 21 Social Services Committee in 2000 on NVQ for residential 22 childcare staff – 23 A. That's right. 24 Q. -- where you propose that 110 residential social workers 25 would be given access to the NVQ programme. That is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>
<p>1 page 4 of the report on screen, paragraph 2.44. What 2 does "access" mean there? Why isn't it that they would 3 be required to? 4 A. I think that's what it means. 5 Q. It does mean that? 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. Did that happen? 8 A. Yes. It was a requirement. It came a statutory 9 requirement around about that time that staff should 10 actually be registered for training and should be 11 qualified. That included managers and other staff 12 within the residential homes. 13 Q. At page 30 of your statement, paragraph 20.41, you set 14 out the courses there that were provided. What, if any, 15 specific training did residential staff receive on child 16 sexual abuse? 17 A. This list was from very early on in terms of training 18 available to staff, so I have to say this is a very 19 dusty document with just a list of training courses, so 20 it's hard to work out what was underneath that. 21 I don't know whether it is too far forward, but if 22 I was able to show you the 1999/2000 report, you would 23 see reference to working with children who have been 24 abused, issues about the full range of responsibilities 25 that we had. I'm not saying that covered all staff in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>	<p>1 one year, but it certainly illustrated a significant 2 investment in that type of training. 3 Q. What training would have been given field social workers 4 on child sexual abuse? Is that listed here? 5 A. They wouldn't be excluded from it -- I would need to 6 look at each of those courses, but I would think they 7 would be available to a full range of staff. Some of 8 them would be specific to field workers, some to 9 residential staff, but some would be open to all staff. 10 We also had -- to try to reach as many people as 11 people, we also had a series of seminars so that we 12 could actually reach out to larger numbers of people 13 across lunchtimes or across half a day. 14 Q. From listening to your answers, it appears as if you 15 were personally engaged in this issue? 16 A. I was very proud of the way the training plan had 17 developed and I do want to say, going back to 18 Sandra Taylor, she is somebody who provided terrific 19 energy to get all of this off the ground and the 20 training officer was Sue Griffiths, who I regarded as 21 first class. So it felt in the -- it felt towards 22 1998/1999/2000, that we were getting a grip on proper 23 systems linking individual training needs with the 24 strategy for the department. 25 Q. Given the period that you have described, so the late</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 1990s, and given what appears to have been your personal 2 commitment and involvement in this aspect of your 3 responsibilities, can you remember if any training was 4 provided for harmful sexual behaviour between children? 5 A. I believe it was, yes. 6 Q. It may be, Mr Brook, that you have already answered this 7 question, but I just need to be sure that I have 8 understood your response. We are going to look at the 9 legacy of "As if they were our own" and "Strong enough 10 to care". This you deal with at paragraphs 18 to 20.13 11 and then 21.3 to 21.8. I would like to ask you briefly 12 about the 1992 report "As if they were our own" which we 13 know was into residential childcare which the inquiry 14 has heard evidence about and specifically from 15 David White. 16 Without going to that report, at page 7 at the 17 bottom paragraph, the conclusion reached is: 18 "Here in Nottinghamshire we must urgently accelerate 19 our efforts to improve services for young people in 20 care. We have found evidence that some young people 21 have faced the prospect of violence and sexual abuse 22 within our care and this is manifestly unacceptable." 23 I think you have agreed with me that, given 24 a variety of issues that we have looked at, certainly 25 when you started, and given your concerns about systemic</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 cultural management issues, that at that point of your 2 joining, children in care in Nottinghamshire were being 3 failed? You agree with that? You nod your head. 4 A. I agree, yes. 5 Q. The report made 79 recommendations for improving the 6 care of children in the county. We have learnt from 7 that report from Sandra Taylor in 1995 of the myriad 8 issues that she identified. 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. Did you take personal responsibility for ensuring that 11 the 79 recommendations were followed through? 12 A. Yes, I take personal responsibility for those. The way 13 that operated was, it was in different levels. There 14 were plenty around human resource staffing issues. But 15 a lot of the key recommendations were around the 16 strategy for residential care. So what had been set up 17 around the time of that report was an implementation 18 team, which was there to carry forward the 19 recommendations over the following three years. It ran 20 for three years. It reported to members after a year 21 and a half with a progress report. And then presumably, 22 after three years, had a final report with a range of 23 recommendations for the future provision of residential 24 homes. 25 Q. In the light of the Amberdale report, or the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>
<p>1 Sandra Taylor memo, did you think progress was -- or 2 momentum in implementation slowed down? 3 A. I think "slowed down" or "inadequate". It was slower 4 than I would have liked, and I wish to comment on that, 5 in the sense that we came forward with a pattern of 6 residential provision which had been designed to meet 7 the needs of the service as we understood them at the 8 time. We went forward with looking for sites and 9 accommodation to replace the residential facilities 10 which by any standards were clearly inadequate from the 11 reports that we'd got and the previous presentations to 12 this hearing. 13 We did hit a problematic time because of planning 14 issues. It did appear that people didn't necessarily 15 want a residential home for children next door. People 16 would be aware of that. But it became a severe issue 17 for us because we couldn't make progress. 18 It did reach the point where we actually had to 19 review the strategy because the impact of our 20 residential care facilities was seen to be too big on 21 the communities and we reviewed that strategy and 22 decided to move towards providing smaller, local homes, 23 which were more acceptable, more integrated and would 24 have less community reaction than might have been the 25 case.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>	<p>1 So we did have a problem in the mid to late '90s of 2 losing momentum. 3 Q. Did you have any sense in the process, Mr Brook, of 4 a lack of political will to see this through? 5 A. No. I do -- I will observe, however, that in terms of 6 at least one locality, which I don't want to mention, 7 there was actually -- not political opposition, but not 8 from the county council. So if we're looking at sort of 9 a corporate approach to childcare, I felt quite 10 disappointed. 11 Q. Inevitably, I've got to follow that up. Where were you 12 meeting that resistance? 13 A. From the whole place -- it was from the whole community 14 in a particular area. 15 Q. They simply didn't want children's homes in their area? 16 A. No. We resolved that by coming forward with an 17 alternative proposal for smaller facilities, which we 18 managed to implement. I won't say it was popular, but 19 we managed to deliver it. 20 Q. Moving on to a different issue, if I may. This is 21 discussed towards the end of your statement. 22 Paragraph 56, please, where there is a report on 23 confidential reporting code of practice for the 24 county council. This is at NSC000913. The document 25 itself will be published in due course on the website.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 It sets out a long list of ways in which children could 2 make complaints. Were you conscious of the fact that, 3 despite these possible means of complaint, there 4 remained barriers to disclosure for children? 5 A. I wasn't as conscious of that as I am now. 6 Q. Right. Do you think your answer is a reflection of 7 a general lack of understanding at the time? 8 A. I can't say that. I can only speak for myself. 9 Q. Turning, please, to the archiving and destruction of 10 records. You have provided very recently, I think 11 overnight, a document that you have found on childcare 12 records, retention and destruction. This is INQ002946. 13 We go to page 16, please, of your statement, 14 paragraph 8, and go to the bottom of the page. 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. There you say: 17 "I cannot recollect the specific statutory 18 timescales ..." 19 This document that you have provided sets that out. 20 If we go to the document that's on the screen, and if we 21 go, please, to page 3, paragraph 5, what we are looking 22 at is an extract from the 1994 practice and procedure 23 guidance. 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. At page 3, paragraph 5, we can see a table which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 provides information on how long to keep files in each 2 of these different categories of case. We can see at 3 point 3, "Looked-after child -- (all 4 accommodated/care/foster/residential/other/any 5 duration)", and that these should be retained until 6 their 75th birthday or, if they die before they are 7 18 years old, 15 years after death. 8 Generally, Mr Brook, are you able to help the 9 inquiry or offer any reasons as to why records relating 10 to children who were in care during your tenure, as has 11 been the experience of complainants to this inquiry, why 12 such records may no longer exist or be difficult to 13 locate or be incomplete? 14 A. I can't help the inquiry with that. I would want to 15 point out that, as well as case records, the whole 16 record of management meeting and decision making in the 17 department has been lost and either archived or 18 destroyed. It's a general problem as well. 19 Q. So when you took up post, there was, to use a rather 20 strange phrase, a document deficit for your department 21 as well, as well as records? 22 A. No, not when I took up post. Since I left post. Those 23 documents -- a lot of documentation is no longer 24 available. 25 Q. That's in spite of this guidance?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>
<p>1 A. I was talking more generally about my knowledge about 2 the management minutes and organisation documents, but 3 I can't help you with this in any detail at all. 4 Q. Contact with insurers, please. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Unconnected to the previous questions I have asked you. 7 What contact, if any, did the department have with 8 council insurers? 9 A. I didn't engage in that process. The only contact I had 10 was on one or two occasions when some individual 11 agreements came through for my signature. 12 Q. So does it follow from your answer that you weren't 13 involved in dealing with civil claims made against the 14 local authority arising out of care? 15 A. No, I wasn't. We did have a departmental officer who 16 was connected with corporate colleagues, legal and 17 financial, which I know you're aware about, where there 18 was a group that came together and looked at that, but 19 I wasn't involved in it. 20 Q. Finally, Mr Brook, you left your appointment in 2005. 21 A. Mmm. 22 Q. How would you want the panel to view the state of 23 the provision of residential and foster care to 24 looked-after children? How would you like them to view 25 that by that date?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 A. You would expect to see at that date that there was 2 significant reprovision of residential homes, that we 3 had changed our system from some of these larger 4 inadequate buildings to something that was more homely, 5 personal and in the community. So I'd like to see that 6 as a positive. We have talked about NVQ training of 7 residential staff, and I would hope that the department 8 was as good as anywhere else at that time in terms of 9 the training and support that it gave staff. I would 10 hope that the -- I would know that there was a better 11 management system in place than the one that we 12 inherited. 13 If I could just speak very briefly on that, if you 14 actually go back to the "As if they were our own" 15 document, there was a surprising amount of attention 16 there given to management structure and delegation. The 17 general thrust of that strategy was to make sure that 18 all decisions were delegated to local level to generic 19 managers. I do understand that, and I think in a stable 20 environment that would have worked. 21 I do think it's turned out that that wasn't 22 appropriate for the time, and what we have put into 23 place across the mid '90s, around about 1998 -- and 24 finished in 1998, we put into place a specialist system 25 of children's management right through from the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 assistant director right through to local level to make 2 sure the senior managers and the district managers, who 3 were focusing on supporting their staff, would have more 4 children specialist knowledge and would actually be able 5 to actually learn by having a letter overview of what 6 was going on. 7 Q. From what we have seen in 1995 to be a culture towards 8 children, what I hope I could paraphrase as a negative 9 culture towards children in care, when you left in 2005, 10 what do you think the culture towards children in 11 residential care was? 12 A. I would have hoped that what I left behind was 13 a better-trained staff group who had actually embraced 14 and taken on the value of being child centred rather 15 than staff centred or organisation centred. I don't -- 16 I can't sit here and say everything would have been 17 perfect and in the right place, but I do personally 18 believe that we're in a significantly better place. All 19 I can say about that is that we were subject to external 20 scrutiny reports by the inspectors, by various external 21 organisations through the late '90s and into the early 22 2000s and the information I received from them, their 23 judgment was that we had moved from being a department 24 in a very difficult place to one which was seen to be 25 good with very promising prospects across the piece.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 MR SADD: Mr Brook, thanks for your patience with me. There 2 may be questions from the panel. 3 Questions by THE PANEL 4 THE CHAIR: Mr Brook, I just want to pick up on Mr Sadd's 5 latter point there. In view of the comments made by 6 both Rod Jones and Sandra Taylor and their significant 7 email messages to you in the early '90s, were you 8 confident, by the time you left, that the specific kinds 9 of issues that they highlighted had been addressed, they 10 were no longer deep rooted in the system? 11 A. I would believe that they were no longer deep rooted. 12 I do know that some of these professional decisions are 13 difficult and that sometimes we do, in hindsight -- 14 sorry, we do get things wrong. So I can't say that one 15 can ever be 100 per cent secure, but I do believe we 16 left a safer system in place with stronger support. 17 THE CHAIR: Those pieces of correspondence to you did 18 reflect very, very serious attitudinal problems -- 19 A. Yes. 20 THE CHAIR: -- which are not necessarily amenable to change 21 via training. 22 A. No, but if we consider that this is -- if we look across 23 the whole of the management agenda, there were 24 significant processes put in place about better 25 recruitment, better support for people. We looked at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>
<p>1 supervision, we achieved -- invested in people's 2 standards to make sure we had proper supervision 3 arrangements in place. We had individual training needs 4 analysis for all staff. Sorry, I maybe need to stop 5 there, but there was a whole range of processes, 6 personal, human resources and professional processes 7 which I believe would support staff and would leave us 8 in a much better place. 9 THE CHAIR: Can you give an indication of how many staff 10 were actually disciplined or dismissed because they 11 simply weren't suitable, or found alternatives because 12 they weren't suitable, to work in residential care? 13 A. I can't give you a number, but you've seen the 14 individual reports. We -- I do accept the issue that we 15 could have had a better overview of things. But in 16 terms of individual cases, we did pursue them, we did do 17 the proper enquiries. I'm not saying we got every 18 decision right, but I don't believe we actually avoided 19 any that we had the capacity to deal with. 20 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr Brook. 21 A. Thank you. 22 (The witness withdrew) 23 MR SADD: Chair, that completes Mr Brook's evidence. It is 24 now 11.30 am. Would you like us to start again at 25 11.45 am?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>	<p>1 THE CHAIR: Yes, thank you, we will return at 11.45 am. 2 (11.30 am) 3 (A short break) 4 MR SADD: Chair, we are now going to hear from David Mellen. 5 He's provided two statements to the inquiry: INQ001960 6 is the first statement; and a supplementary statement at 7 INQ002568. 8 MR DAVID MELLEN (sworn) 9 Examination by MR SADD 10 MR SADD: Mr Mellen, as you heard me say a moment ago, you 11 have provided two statements to the inquiry. The first 12 is dated 2 August 2018. That runs to 10 pages. The 13 second is dated 5 September 2018, and runs to three 14 pages. 15 I think you signed both of those statements? 16 A. I did. 17 Q. At the time of signing them, were you satisfied that 18 what was set out in the statements was true, as far as 19 you're concerned and remember? 20 A. I was. 21 Q. Is it also right, summarising it very briefly, that the 22 second statement deals or addresses the issue of public 23 apologies as opposed to private apology; is that right? 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. You have read both the statements since. Are there any</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 corrections that need to be made?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. The panel have copies of both your statements. I am not</p> <p>4 going to take you to every single line. We are going to</p> <p>5 discuss specific topics that arise. Paragraph 2,</p> <p>6 please. You have been an elected member of Nottingham</p> <p>7 City Council for 16 years and have been a number of the</p> <p>8 council executive for the last 10 years. You were</p> <p>9 appointed as portfolio holder for Children's Services on</p> <p>10 12 May 2008 and you have held that role with annual</p> <p>11 reappointments since that time?</p> <p>12 A. That's correct.</p> <p>13 Q. So you have been in post -- not in post. You have been</p> <p>14 in that position for 10 years?</p> <p>15 A. That's right, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. You state that the role "involves taking the political</p> <p>17 lead in developing policy and making decisions that</p> <p>18 affect children in Nottingham"?</p> <p>19 A. That's right.</p> <p>20 Q. What, in practice, Mr Mellen, does "taking the political</p> <p>21 lead in developing policy" mean?</p> <p>22 A. I think there are a number of aspects to it: obviously</p> <p>23 working closely with council officers to set vision and</p> <p>24 policy at a high level. It's not my role to get</p> <p>25 involved with the detail. However, I need to assure</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 myself that services to young people are being delivered</p> <p>2 in the way that I'm told, and so, therefore, talking to</p> <p>3 young people and to foster carers, to those who work on</p> <p>4 the front-line, is also an important part of that, so</p> <p>5 that I can be well informed when I am making those</p> <p>6 decisions in partnership with senior officers.</p> <p>7 Q. Does your role also include taking the political lead in</p> <p>8 responding to issues of public concern relating to</p> <p>9 children in care?</p> <p>10 A. It does.</p> <p>11 Q. At paragraph 3 you say that within your role you</p> <p>12 "regularly meet with children in care, care leavers and</p> <p>13 foster carers during a mixture of visits to front-line</p> <p>14 services and other meetings". Just focusing on foster</p> <p>15 care for a moment, please, do you carry out visits to</p> <p>16 foster homes themselves?</p> <p>17 A. I have done.</p> <p>18 Q. When was your last visit?</p> <p>19 A. In the summer, I think probably August.</p> <p>20 Q. Will you visit those children placed in independent</p> <p>21 fostering agencies?</p> <p>22 A. No, I haven't done that.</p> <p>23 Q. Have you visited children in foster care beyond the</p> <p>24 20-mile radius of the city?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>
<p>1 Q. In the context of those visits, please, Mr Mellen, do</p> <p>2 you take the opportunity to speak to the children in the</p> <p>3 placement?</p> <p>4 A. I do when they are there.</p> <p>5 Q. Does that mean that when you carry out your visits --</p> <p>6 well, tell us. When was the last visit that you spoke</p> <p>7 to a child in care, in foster care?</p> <p>8 A. It was the visit I made in August. I was going</p> <p>9 primarily to meet with the foster carer. She'd had</p> <p>10 a bereavement and had been a long-serving foster carer,</p> <p>11 but her foster daughter was also there, and we discussed</p> <p>12 how she was getting on at college, her involvement in</p> <p>13 the Children in Care Council, so we had a conversation</p> <p>14 with her. I didn't meet with her alone, but I did speak</p> <p>15 with her.</p> <p>16 Q. When was the previous occasion that you'd spoken to</p> <p>17 a child in foster care prior to your August visit?</p> <p>18 A. The previous occasion would have been earlier on this</p> <p>19 year, maybe April or May. It was a very small child,</p> <p>20 maybe 2 or 3, who had only been in placement for a few</p> <p>21 weeks, and so it was at a different level, just talking</p> <p>22 to her about her toys and what books she was reading.</p> <p>23 Q. You qualified a moment ago, in answer to my question</p> <p>24 about the visit you made in August, you very promptly</p> <p>25 said that you didn't see the older child alone. Should</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>	<p>1 the inquiry understand that when you do make visits, you</p> <p>2 try and speak to children on their own, or does that</p> <p>3 never happen?</p> <p>4 A. It does happen when I go to children's homes.</p> <p>5 Q. Does it happen when you go to foster care?</p> <p>6 A. It hasn't done, no.</p> <p>7 Q. It hasn't done so?</p> <p>8 A. No.</p> <p>9 Q. That's in the ten years you have been the portfolio</p> <p>10 holder?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, as far as I recall.</p> <p>12 Q. Are children in foster care, in those circumstances,</p> <p>13 able to speak to you about their concerns, if any, that</p> <p>14 they may have of their placement?</p> <p>15 A. Maybe not when their foster carer is there, but there</p> <p>16 are other occasions when I might meet them. For</p> <p>17 example, at celebration events, where we have awards for</p> <p>18 children in care, or indeed at the Children in Care</p> <p>19 Council, when I would regularly meet with children, and</p> <p>20 often I do have one-to-one conversations there where</p> <p>21 perhaps there would be a greater freedom for young</p> <p>22 people to talk to me about concerns.</p> <p>23 Q. When was the last time, Mr Mellen, that you took</p> <p>24 advantage of that opportunity?</p> <p>25 A. In the summer, I went to the corporate Children in Care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

<p>1 Council I think in July.</p> <p>2 Q. In relation to your visits to residential homes, which</p> <p>3 you have already touched on, are these always planned</p> <p>4 visits?</p> <p>5 A. No.</p> <p>6 Q. So are most of the visits you make unannounced?</p> <p>7 A. If I'm doing a regulation 44 visit, which I do three</p> <p>8 times a year, they have to be unannounced. So although</p> <p>9 the staff at the home will know I'm coming at some point</p> <p>10 during a particular month, they won't know when I'm</p> <p>11 coming, and those visits – it's essential that I speak</p> <p>12 with a child when I'm there, alone, and if I can't do it</p> <p>13 while I'm at the home, then I need to make arrangements</p> <p>14 to speak to the child, maybe on the phone, following</p> <p>15 that visit, to check out that what I've been told by the</p> <p>16 residential staff is triangulated with what the young</p> <p>17 people are saying.</p> <p>18 Q. So should one understand that you arrange visits that</p> <p>19 are after children have been to school and have come</p> <p>20 back to the home?</p> <p>21 A. It varies. This summer, I have visited the same home</p> <p>22 three times, three months in a row, and part of that</p> <p>23 time coincided with the school summer holidays, so I was</p> <p>24 able, even though I was visiting in the morning, to</p> <p>25 speak with young people because they were on holiday</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 from school.</p> <p>2 Q. As a matter of interest, why was it that you those to</p> <p>3 have successive visits to the same home?</p> <p>4 A. That's part of the arrangements in Nottingham for the</p> <p>5 regulation 44 visits. I find them very helpful, because</p> <p>6 it means that you are not just doing a one-off visit,</p> <p>7 you can follow up on issues that you have raised.</p> <p>8 So in the first visit to this particular home this</p> <p>9 summer, I raised an issue that one of the young people</p> <p>10 seemed to be on a part-time timetable at school. He was</p> <p>11 in year 11, his GCSE year. I raised at that point not</p> <p>12 only at the home, but also when I went back to the</p> <p>13 council offices, that I thought that that was something</p> <p>14 that should be concerning, given how important exams</p> <p>15 were, and then got into some discussions about the fact</p> <p>16 that he had had poor mental health and that the</p> <p>17 part-time timetable was a result of some advice from the</p> <p>18 CAMHS service.</p> <p>19 But on one of my later visits, I was able to check</p> <p>20 up on his exam results and to see how that part-time</p> <p>21 timetable may have affected his achievement at that</p> <p>22 time.</p> <p>23 Q. What did you conclude?</p> <p>24 A. I concluded that there was still some concern and that</p> <p>25 balancing the mental health needs of a young person and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>
<p>1 his academic achievement was quite a fine balance to be</p> <p>2 drawn. I know, having looked at results of young people</p> <p>3 in care, that they are generally lower than those of</p> <p>4 the population as a whole, that actually achieving five</p> <p>5 good GCSEs is key to life chances for all young people,</p> <p>6 and that – obviously, I can't question the advice of</p> <p>7 a mental health expert, but I did ask for that to be</p> <p>8 clarified, as to whether that was absolutely necessary</p> <p>9 and whether it wasn't the school maybe having a choice</p> <p>10 that would be easier for them rather than in the best</p> <p>11 interests of the young person who, when I met him,</p> <p>12 I considered to be very able and bright and thought that</p> <p>13 he would be able to achieve five GCSEs.</p> <p>14 Q. Is this something, Mr Mellen, that you are continuing to</p> <p>15 follow up?</p> <p>16 A. For that young person, obviously that's come and gone.</p> <p>17 What I have done is enquired about his college place</p> <p>18 now. He's gone on to a college rather than to do</p> <p>19 A levels. I have asked further questions about whether</p> <p>20 he's getting the support both for his mental health to</p> <p>21 enable him to attend regularly and fully, but also</p> <p>22 whether he is, from his obvious ability, being stretched</p> <p>23 to achieve his potential.</p> <p>24 Q. What does a visit to a residential home in the city look</p> <p>25 like? The last one that you had, how is it carried out</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>	<p>1 in practice? I understand that these are small-scale</p> <p>2 homes with few residents. What does a visit look like?</p> <p>3 What do you do?</p> <p>4 A. So there's a number of elements. I will speak to senior</p> <p>5 staff members. I would also try and speak to a junior</p> <p>6 staff member without senior staff there. I will read</p> <p>7 the file of at least one of the young people there, as</p> <p>8 long as they have given permission for that to happen.</p> <p>9 I will look at various records of staff training, I will</p> <p>10 look at maybe an incident book, a record of young</p> <p>11 people's meetings, where they have been able to raise</p> <p>12 issues. And then, if a young person is there, as I have</p> <p>13 said, I will always make sure I do speak to a young</p> <p>14 person in one form or another, I will have</p> <p>15 a conversation with them.</p> <p>16 Also, it's necessary to speak to one of the birth</p> <p>17 parents of one of the children, if at all possible. If</p> <p>18 that's not possible, I have to speak to their social</p> <p>19 worker or their independent reviewing officer.</p> <p>20 I will spend about two hours in total at the home</p> <p>21 and then write a report which then goes back to the</p> <p>22 service manager for children in care in the council and</p> <p>23 also to the senior officer in the home, and they will</p> <p>24 have to respond to any recommendations that I make.</p> <p>25 Q. Can we go to paragraph 5, please, of your statement.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 This is where you discuss the Nottingham corporate 2 parenting board. You tell the inquiry that it was 3 established at a meeting of the city council executive 4 board in December 2008. You state that, as portfolio 5 holder, you were appointed chair of the board at the 6 first meeting and that you retain that position still?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. Can you help the inquiry understand what you understand 9 your responsibility to be as the chair of the corporate 10 parenting board?</p> <p>11 A. I have chosen to be the chair. That obviously had to be 12 affirmed by the members of the committee. I do see the 13 lead member role as being the champion for children in 14 care wherever possible, and I see this committee as one 15 of the main ways of doing that. So I will be involved 16 in setting the agenda, making sure that we have 17 sufficient reports, that the agenda is balanced, that 18 over a period of time we will look at all aspects of 19 the welfare of children in care, that we will hear from 20 children in care themselves and foster carers who sit on 21 the committee, and I make sure that, you know, members 22 are attending regularly and making contributions.</p> <p>23 Q. Can we have up on screen, please, NCC000385. This is 24 tab 2 of your bundle, please, Mr Mellen. This is a set 25 of minutes from early meetings of the board,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 26 January 2009. Can we go to page 2, please. Under 2 paragraph 3, the second bullet point, we can see set out 3 there: 4 "Councillors' corporate parenting role included ..." 5 And there it is described that children are safe, 6 stable, well looked after, grow into emotionally 7 balanced and resilient young people adequately prepared 8 for adult life. 9 Members of your committee, where you're the 10 portfolio holder, do they make visits to children in 11 foster placements and residential homes?</p> <p>12 A. Members have made visits to children's homes, not in the 13 same regularity as I would do.</p> <p>14 Q. Do you think they should?</p> <p>15 A. I think it would be helpful. I do think that the 16 statutory responsibility is on me as the lead member to 17 do that. Obviously the way in which members of 18 the committee are informed is helpful in the questioning 19 they are able to give to officers. So some of 20 the members in the committee, for example, have been on 21 fostering or adoption panels in the past, some of them 22 have worked with young people, some of them in the past 23 have been social workers.</p> <p>24 Q. Page 3 of the minute, please. We see the board is 25 consulted on some of the strengths and challenges faced</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>
<p>1 by the council in relation to children in care. Amongst 2 the challenges we see set out there at the bottom of 3 the page: 4 "Ensuring all children in care and leaving care 5 receive the best service, with existing good practice 6 replicated citywide." 7 And homelier residential provision, that's over the 8 page: 9 "... to move away from the previous institutional 10 settings ..." 11 Lower down on page 4, "Aspirations of the board", do 12 you see that, the second black bullet point there?</p> <p>13 A. Mmm-hmm.</p> <p>14 Q. "... should include: 15 "Contributing actively to the safeguarding of 16 children in care." 17 What are the practical steps that the board is able 18 to take to carry out those roles, as identified? So we 19 have them there set out all on a page. One can read 20 lots of policies and procedures. What are the practical 21 steps that the board takes to satisfy themselves of 22 these?</p> <p>23 A. Okay. So in terms of referring to more homely 24 residential provision, I think the corporate parenting 25 board, since the date of this meeting, has seen a real</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>	<p>1 journey in Nottingham. I remember going at least once 2 with another member of the corporate parenting board to 3 some of our homes about 10 years ago and being shocked 4 to see, for example, Barbed wire around the roof of one 5 of the homes. Another one where the staff said the 6 showers were locked in case the children pinched the 7 shampoo, and those were shocking things if we were 8 trying to give some kind of levels of care and normality 9 for young people in a residential setting. 10 I'm pleased to say that we have been able to hear 11 and witness the change from big institutional-like 12 children's homes to ones which are much more small 13 family homes that, if you went into, you wouldn't 14 necessarily know it was a children's home unless you met 15 with the young people and the staff there.</p> <p>16 Q. That, you say, is an example of practical discharge of 17 your responsibilities as a corporate parenting board; is 18 that right?</p> <p>19 A. Obviously it hasn't been a decision of the corporate 20 parenting board alone, but the corporate parenting board 21 gives some scrutiny to that and asks regular questioning 22 of reports about children's residential, for example, 23 which comes on a regular basis to the board.</p> <p>24 Q. To your knowledge, what's the degree of coordination 25 between the Children and Young People's Scrutiny</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 Committee and the corporate parenting board in relation 2 to safeguarding? I know you straddle both.</p> <p>3 A. Well, I don't sit on the scrutiny board. I'm held to 4 account by the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>5 Q. Forgive me.</p> <p>6 A. So I appear before them on a regular basis. There are 7 some members of the corporate parenting board who are 8 also on the children's scrutiny board, so I'm -- 9 I believe that they do their job as scrutineers in 10 a more effective way because of the knowledge they have 11 gained as part of the corporate parenting board. So 12 although the two things are not linked and they have 13 different programmes of work, and obviously I chair one 14 and appear before another, the joint membership of some 15 members I think is helpful in discharging our 16 responsibilities as corporate parents, of which, of 17 course, all councillors are, not just those who sit on 18 scrutiny or on the corporate parenting board.</p> <p>19 Q. Can we then go, please, to the complaints procedure for 20 children's social care. This has been discussed at 21 various meetings of the board. I want to go first to 22 a meeting in October 2015. We go to the minutes at 23 NCC000422 and, Mr Mellen, that's at tab 6 of your 24 bundle. This is something you discuss at paragraph 35 25 of your statement. You say at paragraph 35 that at the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 meeting a report was presented to the board about the 2 complaints procedure, and if we look at page 2 of 3 the minutes, we can see various points were highlighted, 4 and we go to (b). Under 22(b) we can see: 5 "The complaints procedure has three stages." 6 We can see that at (c): 7 "During 2014/15 seven formal complaints were 8 received, although it should be noted that young people 9 also have access to [the advocacy service] support if 10 they have any issues they wish to discuss." 11 We can see at (e): 12 "A breakdown of information regarding the nature of 13 complaints ... 14 "(f) When complaints lodged against other young 15 children in care are upheld, it is generally the 16 perpetrators who would be moved and not the victims, but 17 the safety of the children is paramount at all times." 18 At page 3, there is a resolution. We can see at 19 resolution 4: 20 "For an update on children in care social care 21 complaints to be submitted to the board in one year's 22 time." 23 Then we go, please, to a meeting in October 2016. 24 It's tab 7 of your bundle. This is NCC000428. This is 25 discussed at paragraph 38 of your statement. This is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>
<p>1 the update which you were seeking in the previous year's 2 meeting. We can see at point (c) on page 5, please, 3 under item 28 "Children in care social care complaints 4 report". Do you have that?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. At (c): 7 "There have been 14 complaints received from 8 children in care during 2015/16, which is double the 9 number from the previous year. All of these have been 10 resolved at stage 1", which is to provide a written 11 response within 10 working days which may be extended to 12 20 working days. 13 I think it is right that you didn't require 14 a breakdown of those complaints. Why is that?</p> <p>15 A. I can't recall whether we had a breakdown or not. It 16 clearly doesn't say that in the minutes. Generally, we 17 would have done, as to the type of complaints that were 18 brought forward by young people. I can't recall whether 19 we did get a breakdown on that occasion, but it is now 20 our practice to have this report on an annual basis of 21 complaints. Clearly, if those complaints are being 22 concluded at level 1, it shows that the staff dealing 23 with them are dealing with them as soon as they possibly 24 can, without a young person having to go through many 25 layers to get resolution to their complaint.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>	<p>1 Q. We see at letter (c) on page 5, aside from the number of 2 complaints that are set out there, the last sentence: 3 "A noticeable issue raised by the complaint has been 4 the sporadic and inconsistent nature of some social 5 worker support." 6 Was this followed up by the board? 7 A. I think the nature of social workers changing has been 8 a regular issue raised by a number of people, not least 9 young people in care. It is something which is an 10 ongoing struggle for the council, to try and get more 11 regular staff and use less agency staff. It's very 12 difficult for young people to maintain a relationship 13 with social workers if they are changing regularly, 14 which sometimes has been the case in the council, which 15 is something that we have improved.</p> <p>16 Q. Mr Mellen, it may be the answer to the question I was 17 asking you as to the outcome, but was this issue 18 followed up by the board?: 19 "A noticeable issue raised by the complaints has 20 been the sporadic and inconsistent nature of some social 21 worker support." 22 What you have done is you've provided a generalised 23 answer as to why that might be occurring. My question 24 was directed at what the board does in practice. Was 25 this something that was followed up by the board, given</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 that it is a complaint?</p> <p>2 A. I'm not sure if that specific requirement -- or that</p> <p>3 nature of inconsistent social worker support, whether</p> <p>4 that note applies to individual social workers being</p> <p>5 inconsistent in their practice, which is obviously of</p> <p>6 a concern and would have been noted by the officers</p> <p>7 there, or whether it's to do with social workers being</p> <p>8 different social workers. I'm sorry, I'm not sure if</p> <p>9 I'm answering your question.</p> <p>10 Q. You are. One of the issues that's come out in this</p> <p>11 inquiry, going back to the 1970s and throughout the '80s</p> <p>12 and '90s and 2000s, is a view from some that there has</p> <p>13 been inconsistent and sporadic contact with social</p> <p>14 workers, and here we read of it in 2017, or 2016,</p> <p>15 I should say. Is that something that you have come</p> <p>16 across before this entry?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, it will have been, when talking to young people,</p> <p>18 particularly, as I've mentioned, about the change in</p> <p>19 social worker. I think for young people who have been</p> <p>20 through terrible experiences in their life maybe before</p> <p>21 they have come into care, to then get to trust an</p> <p>22 individual who then is changed or changed more than</p> <p>23 once, these young people have had many changes in their</p> <p>24 life, and to change placement or school placement or</p> <p>25 social worker is further disturbing and, you know, not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 allowing them to build up relationships of trust, which</p> <p>2 is what we want for our young people, to have people</p> <p>3 that they can trust.</p> <p>4 Q. So what's the corporate parenting board's view of trying</p> <p>5 to provide consistency? What steps have you taken as</p> <p>6 a board to look into that?</p> <p>7 A. Well, what I mentioned earlier about reducing the number</p> <p>8 of agency social workers, so recruiting social workers</p> <p>9 is a difficult job, but we have done it in a more</p> <p>10 expansive way. The board has had reports of how we have</p> <p>11 had various "Grow your own" schemes for social workers,</p> <p>12 so people already working in Nottingham being given the</p> <p>13 support to train as social workers, having rolling</p> <p>14 recruitment so we can make sure that we have as many</p> <p>15 permanent social workers as possible, and in that</p> <p>16 process, where there are social workers working in</p> <p>17 different parts of the council, the board has</p> <p>18 prioritised the children in care team as being perhaps</p> <p>19 the most important part of children's social care to</p> <p>20 have consistency, because it does have that direct work</p> <p>21 with children as the children's social worker, and so,</p> <p>22 therefore, keeping that consistency is really important.</p> <p>23 I'm not saying that we have got there yet, because, as</p> <p>24 we hear regularly from young people at our "Have your</p> <p>25 say" survey results which young people present to the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>
<p>1 corporate parenting board, the biggest complaint</p> <p>2 continues to be changes of social workers. We are not</p> <p>3 there yet.</p> <p>4 Q. Before we move on to the issue of support for foster</p> <p>5 carers and support for the council in assessing</p> <p>6 fostering applications, one issue that I just want to</p> <p>7 come back to is that, earlier, we were discussing</p> <p>8 coordination between the Children and Young Persons'</p> <p>9 Scrutiny Committee and with the corporate parenting</p> <p>10 board. I think I heard you say that some people</p> <p>11 simultaneously act as members of the committee and are</p> <p>12 on the board. Is that right?</p> <p>13 A. There are one or two members who are both on the</p> <p>14 corporate parenting board and on the Children's Scrutiny</p> <p>15 Committee.</p> <p>16 Q. Do you have any concerns about conflict there?</p> <p>17 A. No. No, I don't. I believe that the information gained</p> <p>18 as a member of the corporate parenting board equips</p> <p>19 councillors to ask more penetrating and informed</p> <p>20 questions when they are asking questions at scrutiny.</p> <p>21 Certainly in my experience, it doesn't give them any</p> <p>22 kind of sense of not asking penetrating questions. In</p> <p>23 fact, I would say it's the opposite.</p> <p>24 Q. Paragraph 32, please, of your statement, page 7. You</p> <p>25 have been asked to comment on a document, NCC000403_010.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>	<p>1 That's at tab 4, please, Mr Mellen, of your bundle. Can</p> <p>2 we go to page 10, please.</p> <p>3 We see that, at the meeting, consideration was given</p> <p>4 to a report that the director of children's safeguarding</p> <p>5 regarding the Fostering Network which acts as an</p> <p>6 independent partner and mediator if allegations are made</p> <p>7 against foster carers. What kind of support, to your</p> <p>8 knowledge, does the Fostering Network offer in practice?</p> <p>9 A. The Fostering Network. All foster carers who work for</p> <p>10 Nottingham City Council are automatically members of</p> <p>11 the Fostering Network. It gives them support and advice</p> <p>12 independent from the council. It's particularly</p> <p>13 important for foster carers where they are going through</p> <p>14 difficult times -- perhaps there's been an allegation</p> <p>15 against them. The Fostering Network can provide support</p> <p>16 that is not part of the council. Although we commission</p> <p>17 that service, we don't operate it.</p> <p>18 Q. Is there any oversight by the council of the kind of</p> <p>19 support and advice that the Fostering Network provides</p> <p>20 to foster carers in the face of having to deal with</p> <p>21 allegations of abuse? Does that form any part of your</p> <p>22 role?</p> <p>23 A. Not part of my role, no. It's an independent</p> <p>24 organisation that is a national organisation that is</p> <p>25 seen to represent foster carers and to be supportive of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

1 **them. Clearly, we commission that service and regularly**
 2 **recommission or otherwise that service and that is**
 3 **referred to in the notes.**
 4 Q. We can see from the meeting that you declared an
 5 interest in that you were acquainted with an employee of
 6 the Fostering Network?
 7 **A. Yes.**
 8 Q. In paragraph 32 you clarify that the local leader of
 9 the Fostering Network service is a personal friend to
 10 you. Obviously you stepped out of this particular
 11 meeting. But more generally, do you have any concerns
 12 that your personal association with the local lead
 13 influences the board's relationship with the
 14 Fostering Network?
 15 **A. We have to be very careful. It is a longstanding**
 16 **friend. But we avoid talking about issues, apart from**
 17 **of a very general nature, and certainly I would not get**
 18 **involved and neither would she talk to me about**
 19 **individual cases where she is seeking to represent**
 20 **a foster carer. It is not appropriate to do that, and**
 21 **I have tried to be open in how the financial**
 22 **relationship is with the Fostering Network by not taking**
 23 **part in that decision.**
 24 Q. I'm going to turn, please, to the involvement, as
 25 portfolio holder, in responding to allegations of child

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1 that fall within the remit of what you would be expected
 2 to be informed of?
 3 **A. Not on a regular basis. I think it would be rare that**
 4 **I would be informed of that. I can't recall of that**
 5 **happening.**
 6 Q. It appears as if there's a distinction drawn, on the one
 7 hand, between sexual abuse of children in care by adults
 8 and, on the other hand, the sexual abuse committed by
 9 children on other children in care. Does that seem to
 10 be a fair summary?
 11 **A. I think the distinction might be more about where things**
 12 **would go into a court situation, where there's been**
 13 **convictions, where there would be public coverage of**
 14 **such allegations. Clearly, with the situation of**
 15 **child-on-child allegations, there are two vulnerable**
 16 **people often involved in that situation, and the care of**
 17 **both the victim and the perpetrator needs to be**
 18 **considered. Therefore, they're unlikely to be in the**
 19 **public realm and therefore I think that probably is the**
 20 **reason why it's unlikely that I would be informed of**
 21 **those.**
 22 Q. In your role as chair of the corporate parenting board,
 23 would you be made aware of such allegations?
 24 **A. No. If I was made aware, it would be in my role as lead**
 25 **member, not as the chair of the corporate parenting**

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1 sexual abuse. Looking to see what you would be told and
 2 when you would be told it, please. You say at
 3 paragraph 7 of your statement in the first line, do you
 4 have that?
 5 **A. Yes.**
 6 Q. "The small number of allegations of sexual abuse of
 7 children in the care of Nottingham City Council that
 8 have been reported to me have been reported orally by
 9 the director of children services."
 10 Is that what DCS stands for?
 11 **A. That's right.**
 12 Q. "I would generally expect to be made aware of an
 13 allegation of sexual abuse of a child in care by an
 14 employee of Nottingham City Council and would expect to
 15 receive further details of disciplinary investigations
 16 or if the case were taken to court."
 17 When was the last time that you were notified of an
 18 allegation of child sexual abuse of a child in care?
 19 **A. I can't say exactly. It would have been a case of an**
 20 **allegation against a foster carer by former children in**
 21 **care.**
 22 Q. Sorry, you can't say exactly, can you give any --
 23 **A. Probably about a couple of years ago.**
 24 Q. Have you been notified in your role of child-on-child
 25 sexual abuse allegations of children in care? Would

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1 **board.**
 2 Q. Our understanding is that the briefings you do get in
 3 relation to allegations of sexual abuse -- and you say
 4 the last one that you remember is about two years ago
 5 and concerned a foster carer -- is that the reports
 6 given to you are purely spoken rather than written; is
 7 that right?
 8 **A. Yes.**
 9 Q. Do you know why that is?
 10 **A. I think there's -- obviously where things are going**
 11 **through the court system, where there is confidential**
 12 **information, that things are not yet resolved, not**
 13 **everything is committed to paper at that stage, and it's**
 14 **important -- you know, my role as a lead member is not**
 15 **to get involved in the detail but to be informed, and**
 16 **therefore there are things that I'm told by the director**
 17 **of children's services that have obviously a great deal**
 18 **of sensitivity. That doesn't stop me from asking**
 19 **further questions about it. So in that particular**
 20 **case --**
 21 Q. This is the foster carer case?
 22 **A. Yes. In that particular case, the foster carer**
 23 **was/is -- was married to another foster carer. They**
 24 **were a couple. And so the ongoing situation with regard**
 25 **to him coming to court, but his wife -- ex-wife I think**

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<p>1 now -- continuing to be in a foster carer relationship</p> <p>2 was something that I was concerned about and continued</p> <p>3 to ask questions about.</p> <p>4 Q. So what you're telling the inquiry is, in that</p> <p>5 particular situation, the foster mother, as it were,</p> <p>6 continued to foster children in the placement?</p> <p>7 A. There were other children placed who weren't making the</p> <p>8 allegation, I understand, but were still in her care,</p> <p>9 and obviously I think that has probably changed now, but</p> <p>10 at the time of the court case, that was an issue that</p> <p>11 I was concerned about.</p> <p>12 Q. This was two years ago --</p> <p>13 A. Mmm.</p> <p>14 Q. -- apparently -- sorry, I don't mean that rudely, I mean</p> <p>15 two years ago, as far as you can remember. What you</p> <p>16 were learning was, in spite of the allegation of sexual</p> <p>17 abuse of those in care in the foster placement, my</p> <p>18 understanding of what you are saying is that the</p> <p>19 children remained in the placement?</p> <p>20 A. It was a different child.</p> <p>21 Q. It was a different child?</p> <p>22 A. Mmm.</p> <p>23 Q. Your understanding of risk posed to children, how</p> <p>24 sophisticated is that understanding? Do you think that</p> <p>25 that continued placement raised any questions?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 A. It raised questions for me, and that's why I asked them.</p> <p>2 The child that remained was a boy. All the allegations</p> <p>3 were being made by young women who had been in the care</p> <p>4 of that foster family, but, yes, I did continue to ask</p> <p>5 questions, and still have done, because I think it was</p> <p>6 the right question to ask.</p> <p>7 Q. Are you satisfied with the responses you have been</p> <p>8 receiving? Because, as I understand your evidence, it</p> <p>9 is an ongoing issue?</p> <p>10 A. It is an ongoing issue. I have been satisfied that the</p> <p>11 issue is being addressed in an appropriate way.</p> <p>12 Q. How soon after an incident of disclosure of sexual abuse</p> <p>13 of a child in care would you expect to be informed?</p> <p>14 A. I think I would be informed where that allegation had</p> <p>15 got the involvement of the police or where it was likely</p> <p>16 to come into the public arena. It might be that if it's</p> <p>17 a particularly local case, then other members of</p> <p>18 the council might need to be informed, if it was going</p> <p>19 to come into the arena, particularly if it was locality</p> <p>20 based or clearly the leader of the council might need to</p> <p>21 be informed that this was something that was likely to</p> <p>22 be covered more widely.</p> <p>23 Q. So one of the criteria is managing the response should</p> <p>24 the allegation become public? Is that one of</p> <p>25 the criteria for informing you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>
<p>1 A. I think that would be a factor, yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Which of the criteria that you have described are</p> <p>3 criteria that relate to your role as safeguarding the</p> <p>4 interests of children, as opposed to the interests of</p> <p>5 what appears to be what you are suggesting or warning,</p> <p>6 as it were, the council of what might occur?</p> <p>7 A. I think the vulnerability of children is the prime</p> <p>8 concern. Sadly, cases going into the media doesn't</p> <p>9 necessarily preserve that safeguarding. In fact, it</p> <p>10 might make it more difficult, because more people know</p> <p>11 what is being alleged. So, therefore, we would want</p> <p>12 a thorough investigation of the allegation, but putting</p> <p>13 something in the public arena is not something that is</p> <p>14 desired because of the extra vulnerability it could</p> <p>15 impose on a child who is already vulnerable.</p> <p>16 Q. Are there any established criteria, Mr Mellen, that set</p> <p>17 out the trigger for informing you in relation to such</p> <p>18 cases? So are there any cases that you wouldn't be told</p> <p>19 about in relation to sexual abuse of children in care?</p> <p>20 A. I think, as I've said, child-on-child sexual allegations</p> <p>21 I'm less likely to be told, for the reasons --</p> <p>22 Q. You have given the reasons?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. You are satisfied you would be told of all allegations</p> <p>25 arising in relation to children in care being sexually</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>	<p>1 abused?</p> <p>2 A. I couldn't be absolutely certain, but I'm fairly</p> <p>3 confident that that would be the case.</p> <p>4 Q. Coming back to my question, is there any written</p> <p>5 protocol as to what the threshold is for informing you?</p> <p>6 A. No.</p> <p>7 Q. You say you would generally expect to be made aware of</p> <p>8 an allegation of child sexual abuse by an employee of</p> <p>9 the city council. That suggests in the way we have</p> <p>10 discussed -- the use of the word "generally", does that</p> <p>11 suggest that there sometimes are exceptions that you</p> <p>12 become aware of?</p> <p>13 A. I think it's a question of when I might be told, rather</p> <p>14 than when the allegation is made. So, for example,</p> <p>15 there is the very sad situation of a young man who</p> <p>16 eventually took his own life who was abused by</p> <p>17 a residential worker not working for the council, but in</p> <p>18 a place commissioned by the council. I don't know that</p> <p>19 I was told when that allegation was made, but I was made</p> <p>20 aware at a stage when the criminal justice system was</p> <p>21 involved with that -- a member of staff of that</p> <p>22 organisation.</p> <p>23 Q. Would you expect, Mr Mellen, to be notified of historic</p> <p>24 abuse allegations against then employees of</p> <p>25 the county council who now work for the city council?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 Do you have any expectation of being told about those? 2 A. Well, clearly, in the run-up to the -- of this inquiry, 3 then I have asked more questions about that very thing. 4 Q. So my understanding of your answer is that you haven't 5 until now? 6 A. I suppose it depends how far back you're going. 7 Obviously, I assumed responsibility for Children's 8 Services as the lead member in 2008. The county council 9 were responsible up to ten years before that. There are 10 some allegations that, you know, relate still to my 11 period and responsibility. 12 Q. We know that you have been in your role since 2008? 13 A. That's right. 14 Q. And we know that Operation Daybreak started in the 15 summer of 2011. 16 A. Mmm-hmm. 17 Q. Allegations were being made there against staff. Were 18 any allegations referred to you in relation to ex-county 19 employees who had become city employees? Were there 20 such individuals? 21 A. There were. 22 Q. They were notified to you? 23 A. Yes, at various stages I was made aware of those 24 situations where either their employment had terminated 25 or there was ongoing investigations involving them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 Q. Again at paragraph 7, besides the oral reports by the 2 director of Children's Services, the other system we 3 understand by which you would be informed of allegations 4 of abuse is the notifiable incident report system. You 5 say this requires officers to alert senior managers to 6 any potentially significant issues or risks, and then: 7 "Where, in the professional opinion of the ... 8 director, they believe that there are matters that 9 I need to be made aware of, they will forward such 10 reports to me." 11 You say you don't recall receiving a briefing 12 regarding sexual abuse via this route? 13 A. I receive notifiables on a regular basis, but I can't 14 recall one being about sexual abuse. They have been 15 about other things, like child deaths or, for instance, 16 knife crime, where young people have been injured or 17 worse, so they cover a whole wide range of issues, and 18 I do receive them largely on about a monthly basis, 19 depending on when things happen. 20 Q. We have looked, Mr Mellen, to date at how and when you 21 would expect to be informed of an allegation and when in 22 fact you have been. I just want to explore with you 23 what happens next. Would you be kept informed about the 24 steps taken to respond to allegations of sexual abuse? 25 So, for instance, we have heard about your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>
<p>1 involvement in the foster care case, that you think you 2 were first informed about two years ago. You are still, 3 as we understand it, involved in that, or following that 4 up. How does that work in practice? 5 A. Well, as I say in my statement, I have regular meetings 6 with the director of Children's Services, and from time 7 to time I will ask for progress on those investigations 8 and what's happened, particularly to the young people 9 involved. I am also kept informed of the police 10 investigations at a high level, ensuring that we are 11 cooperating and participating fully in those operations. 12 Q. Do you play any part in determining the steps that 13 should be taken? 14 A. No. 15 Q. Should the inquiry understand that your role essentially 16 is one of scrutiny once you have been informed? 17 A. It is. 18 Q. Mr Mellen, the inquiry has heard a lot of evidence from 19 victims and survivors of abuse about apologies that they 20 have received from the city and county councils, and 21 those individuals have provided their perspectives on 22 the content and timing of such apologies. 23 In what circumstances and at what level does the 24 city council make a decision to apologise to a survivor? 25 A. On an individual basis.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>	<p>1 Q. On an individual basis? 2 A. There have been a variety of occasions where senior 3 officers have met with survivors, and I have on one 4 occasion, the leader of the council has, and apologies 5 have been offered in those circumstances. 6 Q. Are those apologies ones that are discussed before 7 meetings take place? So this is the individual apology 8 as opposed to -- you deal later with the general apology 9 issue. We will come on to that. But in relation to 10 where you meet individuals, is there discussion about 11 how that apology should be framed? 12 A. As I said, I have only been in one of those situations. 13 But, no, the apology wasn't discussed before. We had 14 that meeting but the meeting was clearly about another 15 issue. It was about the child of the survivor and she 16 was more interested in that. 17 Q. In the course of that, you discussed -- you provided an 18 apology. Is that right? 19 A. No, I didn't, no. 20 Q. You didn't? 21 A. No. 22 Q. So how did the apology arise that we are speaking about? 23 A. There wasn't an apology in that circumstance. 24 Q. Oh, there wasn't. I understand. Paragraph 8. You say: 25 "Information about significant investigations and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 prosecutions is also provided to me by the director of 2 Children's Services, although I have no involvement in 3 the investigation or disciplinary process", as you have 4 explained to us. 5 Again, this is a variation on a theme that we have 6 already looked at, but do you know what the threshold 7 for determining when investigations are reported to you 8 is? Do you know what that threshold is? 9 A. No, I don't think there is a definite threshold. 10 I think it would vary from case to case. 11 Q. Paragraph 11, please. You say you are not aware whether 12 Nottinghamshire County Council adopts the same approach 13 as the city in relation to investigations of allegations 14 of sexual abuse of children in care. You say you are 15 also not aware of how information about allegations 16 regarding Nottinghamshire County children is shared with 17 the city council. You say you don't know how it is 18 shared. Are you confident that it is in fact being 19 shared? 20 A. I know that there is close working between the officers 21 of the city council and the county council and the 22 police. I'm assuming that where particularly there is 23 a case involving particularly a crossover between the 24 county and the city, where maybe a young person has been 25 in care in the county and then into the city, or maybe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 there is a member of staff who has worked for both, then 2 that decision is -- that case is discussed and due 3 responsibility as to how we are working together on 4 resolving that case and making sure that young person is 5 heard or that adult is heard depending on the situation. 6 Q. Would you see it as your responsibility as portfolio 7 holder to ensure that there is a line of communication 8 in those circumstances? 9 A. Certainly I have been encouraging my staff to work 10 closely with the county council. 11 Q. Paragraph 12, please. You say there: 12 "The Children and Young Persons' Scrutiny Committee 13 at the city council fulfils the role of holding to 14 account the city council and other providers of services 15 to children and young people in the city." 16 You say that you regularly report to and are 17 questioned by the members of this committee. What's the 18 nature of your reports? What will you be providing? 19 A. Well, they will ask about a particular issue. So, for 20 example, they have asked recently about the recruitment 21 of social workers and the retention of social workers. 22 In the past, they have looked at issues like child 23 sexual exploitation and how we are responding to issues 24 that are seen nationally, how we are responding in 25 Nottingham, and they will ask me and officers to go and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>
<p>1 report to them and then they will ask questions about 2 how that is taking place. 3 Q. When those questions are asked of you, how are they 4 followed up by you? 5 A. How are they followed up by me? Well, if we are able to 6 answer the scrutineer's questions, then we will answer 7 them. If we are not able to answer their questions, 8 then we will take those questions away and they will be 9 sent in a written form to the committee or followed up 10 at a subsequent meeting. 11 Q. Between paragraphs 18 and 20, you describe your 12 involvement in police investigations. This is pages 4 13 to 5 of your statement, please. At paragraph 18, you 14 say that you have received "headline briefings on police 15 operations". You say that these are of a general nature 16 and don't include any detail. Can you provide us with 17 a picture of the kind of update you have been provided 18 with? 19 A. I think I have had explanation of what the various 20 police operations are covering. Obviously, some of them 21 are focused particularly on things that are happening in 22 the city, some of them are focused on things that are 23 happening in the county. Obviously there are links 24 between them because staff might have worked at more 25 than one children's home in the city or the county and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>	<p>1 therefore there are links. I have been informed that 2 they are ongoing. I have been informed that there are 3 still submissions being made to those police enquiries. 4 And I have encouraged that to take place so that, 5 actually, they are as full as they possibly can be and 6 that those who have not had the care that they could 7 expect in the care of either Nottingham City or 8 Nottingham County Councils have the full chance to 9 express that concern or that complaint or that 10 allegation, and I have been encouraged by the fact that 11 those are ongoing investigations and are still ongoing 12 now, as I understand. 13 Q. You say at paragraph 20, please, that the political 14 response to briefings has been a keenness to support the 15 operations and that alongside this there was "an 16 acknowledgement of the need to be mindful of ensuring 17 proportionate allocation of resources". To what extent, 18 if at all, Mr Mellen, are you and your political 19 colleagues involved in decisions about resource 20 allocation? 21 A. There would be a high level -- an allocation of 22 resources which would be made by officers of the council 23 but may be approved at the highest level, depending upon 24 the amount of money resourced. Clearly, the priority 25 here is for this inquiry to have the resource it needs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 to complete its job, very important job.</p> <p>2 Q. What is it that you want the inquiry to understand by</p> <p>3 the phrase "proportionate allocation of resources"?</p> <p>4 A. Well, there would be sufficient resource allocated that</p> <p>5 this inquiry would not fall short for the sake of lack</p> <p>6 of recourses.</p> <p>7 Q. We have spoken already about harmful sexual behaviour.</p> <p>8 You have provided the reasons why it is that you won't</p> <p>9 have been informed of particular cases. You say you are</p> <p>10 aware that some children in the care of the city council</p> <p>11 sometimes exhibit sexual behaviour in children's homes</p> <p>12 and foster homes. Do you have any sense, in spite of</p> <p>13 not being informed, of the current scale of harmful</p> <p>14 sexual behaviour across children's homes and foster care</p> <p>15 homes in the city?</p> <p>16 A. As I say, I'm not informed of individual circumstances.</p> <p>17 Q. No, I understand that. But we are looking at the</p> <p>18 general picture?</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 Q. Do you have any sense of the scale of harmful sexual</p> <p>21 behaviour of children in care?</p> <p>22 A. I think, if it was a growing concern, I would have been</p> <p>23 informed. I haven't been informed as such.</p> <p>24 Q. The answer is, no, you don't; is that right?</p> <p>25 A. Well, I think I would have been informed if there had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 been a growing issue here and that people were more and</p> <p>2 more concerned about it.</p> <p>3 Q. And is it something that you have enquired about?</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. To whom?</p> <p>6 A. To the director of Children's Services.</p> <p>7 Q. And you have been told ...?</p> <p>8 A. We have been told that there are -- there isn't an</p> <p>9 increase in the number of allegations made, as far as</p> <p>10 I'm concerned.</p> <p>11 Q. Were you given a sense of the scale, though?</p> <p>12 A. No.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you ask to be given one?</p> <p>14 A. I don't think so, no.</p> <p>15 Q. Paragraph 23, please. You say that during your time as</p> <p>16 portfolio holder, Nottingham City Council has taken</p> <p>17 "a political decision to reduce the size of our</p> <p>18 children's homes from 8-10 bed units to small group</p> <p>19 homes with a maximum of four beds in each, with the</p> <p>20 majority being just two beds". It may be an obvious</p> <p>21 question to you, but for the sake of clarity, please,</p> <p>22 Mr Mellen, in what sense was in a political decision?</p> <p>23 A. Well, it involved resource allocation, it involved</p> <p>24 closing children's homes and opening new ones, which we</p> <p>25 have done largely in partnership with Nottingham City</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>
<p>1 Homes, the housing provider. We have had to find</p> <p>2 appropriate properties that are in the communities but</p> <p>3 not going to make children more vulnerable by where they</p> <p>4 are placed. So, for example, a suggestion was made that</p> <p>5 a home for asylum seekers might be opened in a certain</p> <p>6 area of the city. I was concerned about that, as to</p> <p>7 whether it would make that particular cohort of young</p> <p>8 people more vulnerable by placing them in that</p> <p>9 particular area and the decision was changed and</p> <p>10 although a home was opened in that area, as it has been</p> <p>11 very recently, it wasn't specifically for asylum</p> <p>12 seekers.</p> <p>13 Q. Before I turn to the issue of general apologies, I want</p> <p>14 to look at child sexual exploitation. You discuss this</p> <p>15 between paragraphs 25 and 28. I just want to pick up on</p> <p>16 two matters. First, at paragraph 25, you refer to</p> <p>17 a plan that was set by the council to bring at least</p> <p>18 85 per cent of children in care within 20 miles of</p> <p>19 Nottingham. When was that plan set, do you know?</p> <p>20 A. Yes. It was set in 2015.</p> <p>21 Q. We heard yesterday from Mr Edwards about the county's</p> <p>22 approach to this. Has this goal been met by the city?</p> <p>23 A. It's very close to being met. I understand the figure</p> <p>24 is 83/84 per cent.</p> <p>25 Q. Is any education provided to children in residential and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>	<p>1 foster placements about the risk of sexual abuse and</p> <p>2 child sexual exploitation, as far as you know?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, I believe that is the case. I believe that</p> <p>4 residential workers and foster carers have received</p> <p>5 information and training on this particular issue and</p> <p>6 how they might help the young people in their care to</p> <p>7 take the necessary steps to keep themselves safe from</p> <p>8 this. I know that also there's been drama productions</p> <p>9 in our schools, so some of our children in care will be</p> <p>10 in those schools and watch these drama productions which</p> <p>11 raises the issue of child sexual exploitation, and they</p> <p>12 are always followed by a workshop where young people can</p> <p>13 ask questions.</p> <p>14 Q. How regularly, as portfolio holder, Mr Mellen, are you</p> <p>15 kept abreast of child sexual exploitation issues within</p> <p>16 the city?</p> <p>17 A. Well, you can see from the corporate parenting board</p> <p>18 reports that it is a regular feature. Certainly in the</p> <p>19 last three or four years we have developed quite a lot</p> <p>20 in terms of our reach. So not just working with</p> <p>21 children and with those who care for them, but with</p> <p>22 other groups in the city. So, for example, taxi drivers</p> <p>23 who need to know how to report things that they see that</p> <p>24 might be of a concern. We have also worked with hotel</p> <p>25 staff, reception staff, with the security staff at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 nightclubs or pubs that, actually, if they view 2 something that they think is of concern, they can report 3 them. So there's been a widescale level of training and 4 information given. 5 We have also worked with other authorities. So 6 I sat on a group which involved officers from other 7 authorities in the East Midlands, because we know that 8 child sexual exploitation isn't locality based and it 9 could well spread or involve travel across the region, 10 and, therefore, we need to have all eyes out for the 11 elements of this. 12 Q. Two further issues. The first is looking at support for 13 victims and survivors of abuse. To what extent, if at 14 all, are you briefed about support services for 15 survivors of sexual abuse, in your role as portfolio 16 holder? 17 A. In a number of ways. I know that there are various 18 partnerships with the county council to ensure that 19 there are various fora for survivors to come and meet 20 together and for their story to be heard. I know that 21 there was a listening event held in 2016 by the Crime 22 and Drugs Partnership in the city and that followed up 23 with ongoing support. I know that there is a joint post 24 where people can refer to about noncurrent -- or 25 non-recent abuse. And I know that there has been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 a leaflet produced so that people can be signposted to 2 the right level of support. I think there are a variety 3 of ways that survivors are supported. 4 Q. Mr Mellen, some of the complainants who have given 5 evidence to the inquiry have been, or are, anxious about 6 the funding for their counselling and that that might be 7 cut short. In your political role, are you able to 8 comment for how long that funding for counselling for 9 survivors will be maintained? 10 A. Counselling and the support for survivors will always be 11 a priority. So although we are considering the budget 12 on a regular basis, as are all local authorities, this 13 would be a priority for us to make sure that people who 14 have been let down are not let down again. 15 Q. Can we then go, please, to NCC003688. This is at tab 10 16 of your bundle, please. This is a meeting actions 17 template, we can see -- do you have it, sorry? It is 18 dated 14 February 2018. 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. We can see that at the top of the page. It is a meeting 21 of the safeguarding assurance forum. We can see who is 22 attending: yourself, Chris Cook, Helen Blackman, 23 Clive Chambers and Emily Humphreys taking notes. 24 If we look, please, at page 4, and we go to item 25 5 -- do you have that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>
<p>1 A. I do. 2 Q. We can see "HB", I think that must be a reference to 3 Helen Blackman: 4 "... delivered Alison Michalska's briefing 5 (attached)." 6 Then under it we have "DM", which presumably is you, 7 "informed the meeting of the leader's stance regarding 8 the city council being asked to apologise for historic 9 child abuse ..." 10 The leader at that date, so it is earlier this year, 11 being who? 12 A. Councillor John Collins. 13 Q. Then we read there: 14 "... we will apologise when there is something to 15 apologise for." 16 In your second statement about this, it appears that 17 the reference to the leader, as you have just told us, 18 is the leader of the council -- is that right? 19 A. That's right. 20 Q. Do you know in what context the leader had been asked to 21 apologise? 22 A. I will answer that question. I think I would like to 23 say, first of all, that reading that statement and the 24 bullet point in which it is expressed is offensive in 25 the way that it can be read to those who have had harm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>	<p>1 whilst in our care. That was not at all the intention 2 in this meeting. It was trying to describe the 3 discussions that we'd had about when a public apology 4 should be made. It was not a question of whether that 5 would happen, it was a question of when. Obviously, 6 there have been a number of calls -- 7 Q. May I interrupt you a moment, Mr Mellen? 8 A. Of course. 9 Q. Sorry to do so? 10 A. No, that's fine. 11 Q. But ordinarily, the minutes of such a meeting wouldn't 12 be made public; is that right? 13 A. Not of that meeting, no. 14 Q. They have been made public because the inquiry has asked 15 for them. 16 A. That's right. 17 Q. So the wording that might appear there is a wording that 18 wouldn't have regard to how it might be viewed by the 19 public; is that right? 20 A. That's right. 21 Q. So when you say that the wording there is poorly put 22 together, is that simply because now it's become public, 23 it reads uncomfortably? 24 A. I think expressed like that in whatever circumstance, 25 viewed by anybody, it's not a good reflection of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 the situation we are in.</p> <p>2 Q. Ordinarily, as chair of the meeting, you would sign off</p> <p>3 the minutes?</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. So you will have read these minutes?</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. No doubt, telling us what you are telling us now, you</p> <p>8 would have been uncomfortable in the way that this has</p> <p>9 been described?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, I would have been, but --</p> <p>11 Q. But it hasn't been corrected?</p> <p>12 A. No, that's right.</p> <p>13 Q. So what should the inquiry make of that entry there</p> <p>14 which you say shouldn't have been put in? You signed</p> <p>15 these minutes. You read the minutes after they were</p> <p>16 drafted. No correction has been made. Shouldn't, or</p> <p>17 couldn't, the inquiry conclude that that exactly</p> <p>18 represents the view of the city council at the time?</p> <p>19 A. Well, clearly, I haven't checked those minutes carefully</p> <p>20 enough, and that was my failing, but it doesn't</p> <p>21 represent the situation in the council where we have</p> <p>22 talked many times about the appropriate time to make</p> <p>23 a corporate apology, and it may be that we have got that</p> <p>24 wrong. Clearly, it's caused more distress to people for</p> <p>25 whom their life experience has -- whilst in care was not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 a good one, and it was not our intention to cause</p> <p>2 further distress to those people, and if that statement</p> <p>3 has made that worse for them, I am really sorry about</p> <p>4 that.</p> <p>5 Q. Mr Mellen, why were you being asked to convey this at</p> <p>6 the meeting?</p> <p>7 A. I think it was a discussion with myself and the</p> <p>8 independent chair of the Safeguarding Board. I can't</p> <p>9 remember who raised the issue of a public apology. But</p> <p>10 I was responding with our current position.</p> <p>11 Q. You were responding with your current position: "We will</p> <p>12 apologise when there is something to apologise for". On</p> <p>13 one level, that can be read simply as saying, "There is</p> <p>14 nothing at the date February 2018 to apologise for"?</p> <p>15 A. You could read it like that, but that was not our</p> <p>16 position.</p> <p>17 Q. What was your position, then?</p> <p>18 A. Our position was that we had apologised, and continue to</p> <p>19 apologise, to individuals in a private setting,</p> <p>20 acknowledging their experience whilst in care. Making</p> <p>21 a corporate apology, which was intended to be</p> <p>22 comprehensive in its nature, we'd want to take in as</p> <p>23 many things as we possibly could. There were ongoing</p> <p>24 enquiries at that stage. We anticipated at the end of</p> <p>25 those enquiries there would be apologies, just as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>
<p>1 I anticipate there will be further apologies to come</p> <p>2 from Nottingham City Council.</p> <p>3 Q. Mr Mellen, some of those attending this inquiry would be</p> <p>4 forgiven for thinking that the answer that you are</p> <p>5 giving now is because you're appearing at this inquiry?</p> <p>6 A. I can see how that could be interpreted in that way.</p> <p>7 I believe that the evidence that has come forward as</p> <p>8 part of the process of this inquiry has made it clear</p> <p>9 that an apology is appropriate and so we have done that.</p> <p>10 As I've said, I don't know that we've got that right,</p> <p>11 and I don't want to have caused further concern and</p> <p>12 upset to people because of the tardiness, maybe, of our</p> <p>13 apology.</p> <p>14 Q. Mr Mellen, finally, you say the evidence that has come</p> <p>15 forward to this inquiry means that an apology is</p> <p>16 appropriate. Clearly, what one can infer from that is</p> <p>17 that, as at February 2018, an apology wasn't</p> <p>18 appropriate?</p> <p>19 A. Well, we decided it wasn't at that particular time. We</p> <p>20 would be apologising. The statement says we will</p> <p>21 apologise. We hadn't reached that point where we'd made</p> <p>22 that decision to do so corporately.</p> <p>23 Q. Because ...? Can you finish my sentence? You hadn't</p> <p>24 reached that decision to apologise corporately</p> <p>25 because ...?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>	<p>1 A. We wanted our apology to be as comprehensive as</p> <p>2 possible, to take in all the lines of enquiry, all the</p> <p>3 allegations that had been made, so that our apology</p> <p>4 wouldn't just be words but it would be meaningful and it</p> <p>5 would be followed by action as to what we were going to</p> <p>6 do as a result of that apology.</p> <p>7 Q. But, Mr Mellen, since 2010, the city council and the</p> <p>8 county council had been facing numerous and accumulating</p> <p>9 allegations of sexual abuse in care. This is 2018. So</p> <p>10 the evidence was there to be had. And prior to the</p> <p>11 calling of this inquiry in 2015, it was known that there</p> <p>12 were a significant number of allegations of sexual</p> <p>13 abuse.</p> <p>14 A. Mmm.</p> <p>15 Q. What more evidence did you need, as at 2018, February,</p> <p>16 to make an apology?</p> <p>17 A. I'm not sure that I can answer that question. Clearly,</p> <p>18 we haven't got that right and we should have apologised</p> <p>19 earlier.</p> <p>20 MR SADD: Mr Mellen, thank you for your patience. Chair,</p> <p>21 I wonder if you or members of your panel would have any</p> <p>22 questions?</p> <p>23 THE CHAIR: Mr Frank?</p> <p>24 Questions by THE PANEL</p> <p>25 MR FRANK: If we could go back, please, to the document you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 first turned up for us, which is behind your tab 2, 2 NCC000385_001, and in particular if we could direct our 3 attention to page 4 of that, which is the aspiration 4 that you have already referred us to in part, the 5 aspiration for your board. You I think mentioned the 6 first of the bullet points. What I wanted to ask you is 7 in relation to the third of them: 8 "Considering and encouraging the engagement of 9 children, young people and their carers in the work of 10 the board." 11 That's something which, since 2009 -- can you help 12 us as to what you have done to encourage the engagement 13 of children and young persons in the work of your board? 14 A. Well, there are young people who are invited to every 15 meeting and on most occasions they do come. Obviously 16 young people move on, so sometimes young people get used 17 to being part of the board and then go to university, so 18 no longer can attend. But we always provide some 19 support in terms of the person who co-ordinates the 20 Children in Care Council to come along and help the 21 young people. I think that's absolutely vital for the 22 needs of the board to be effective in overseeing the 23 needs of children in care, and, you know, where the lead 24 officer has come without young people, I have recently 25 not let him speak because I wanted to hear the views of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 young people, not the reported views of young people. 2 Equally, we have two carers on the corporate county 3 board who also speak in their experience as foster 4 carers. 5 MR FRANK: I know that in one of your reports you received 6 information concerning the number of children who were 7 in care in Nottingham who were sometimes called 8 "missing", sometimes called "absent", sometimes called 9 "absconded", there are different words used for the same 10 thing: they disappear from the care system for a period 11 or sometimes permanently. 12 A. Yes. 13 MR FRANK: What I wanted to ask you is this: what, if 14 anything, have you done to try to find out what it is 15 that's causing the children and young people to 16 disappear from their care placements? 17 A. I think we have had a report on that, and the report 18 described the push and the pull factors. 19 MR FRANK: Yes. 20 A. So, for example, it might be that young people are 21 unhappy in the placement. It could also be that their 22 birth families are living nearby or somebody else that 23 they want to spend time with, and they are dissatisfied 24 with the level of contact they can have with that family 25 and take it into their own hands to have more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>
<p>1 There are also young people who come as 2 unaccompanied asylum seekers and, as they approach 18, 3 they know that the ongoing protection of being a child 4 in care is coming to an end, and sadly there have been 5 young people who have gone missing from care in those 6 circumstances. 7 MR FRANK: So there are a number of different reasons why 8 children might go missing from care. One of the things 9 we were told yesterday was children were preponderantly 10 disappearing for short periods and then being returned 11 to care, which doesn't, on the face of it, seem like 12 a particularly sensible solution if they are likely to 13 be unhappy when they return to care and disappear again. 14 Can you tell us what you are doing to avoid that being 15 repeated, as it were? 16 A. Obviously a return interview is very important for young 17 people when they have been missing and those are carried 18 out by young people -- by adults who are not directly 19 involved with their care. For example, with our 20 children's homes we have a twinning arrangement whereby 21 staff from another home will come and do the return 22 interviews so that issues can be looked into as to 23 whether there was a reason for them to leave, a push 24 factor, for example. So they can then use the advocacy 25 system or the complaints system or even, on an informal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>	<p>1 basis, their next keywork session with their lead 2 residential worker to discuss what it is. 3 Sometimes, it is -- you know, it is going to see 4 their mum, and you can understand why that's a perfectly 5 natural thing, whilst not being something that we would 6 be permitting in terms of beyond their contact period, 7 but it's understandable, and often, when children are 8 missing, they -- the staff know where they are, but it's 9 still characterised as missing. Obviously it is a very 10 concerning thing because we know that children who are 11 missing are particularly vulnerable. 12 MR FRANK: Exactly. Thank you very much. 13 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Mellen. 14 A. Thank you. 15 (The witness withdrew) 16 MR SADD: Chair, that concludes this morning's witnesses. 17 Might I suggest we resume again at 2.00 pm? 18 THE CHAIR: Yes. Thank you, Mr Sadd. 19 (1.04 pm) 20 (The short adjournment) 21 (2.00 pm) 22 MR SADD: Chair, good afternoon, and members of the panel. 23 The first witness that the inquiry is going to hear from 24 this afternoon is Mr Paddy Tipping. His statement is at 25 INQ002570.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 MR PADDY TIPPING (sworn) 2 Examination by MR SADD 3 MR SADD: Mr Tipping, good afternoon. You have provided 4 a 14-page statement to the inquiry. Was it a statement 5 that you signed? 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. At the time of signing it -- we can see 8 7 September 2018 -- were you satisfied that what you 9 were setting out there was the truth, as far as you can 10 remember? 11 A. Yes, but there is just one correction. 12 Q. One correction you want to make. 13 A. That's in paragraph 8, where I say "Beechwood and Redcot 14 merged". There's always been some confusion about the 15 term "Beechwood". It would be better, I think, if it 16 said "the Lindens and Redcot merged". 17 Q. I'm looking at paragraph 8. Oh, I see. Forgive me. So 18 the word "Redcot" that appears there in the second line 19 should be "the Lindens"? 20 A. I think that would be better, to get some consistency 21 about the names. 22 Q. Thank you. Anything else? The panel have a copy of 23 your statement. They have the documents lying behind 24 the statement. The statement will be published over the 25 next few days on the inquiry website. I am not going to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 take you through everything line by line. We are going 2 to address some specific topics to which you have 3 already been alerted. We will go to those by reference 4 to what you say in your statement. 5 First, may I summarise your background, as you set 6 it out. This is between paragraphs 2 to 5. You set out 7 your professional background, employed as a social 8 worker by Nottingham City Council from 1972. After 9 a few months, you were transferred to being an employee 10 of the county council as a result of the local 11 government reorganisation. You worked in this role 12 until November 1979, when you became a project leader 13 for the Church of England Children's Society. 14 At paragraph 3, you describe how, in April 1992, you 15 were elected the MP for Sherwood and continued to 16 represent the area until you retired in April 2010. 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. You held various positions and posts in parliament and 19 government. 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. You became the Police and Crime Commissioner for 22 Nottinghamshire in November 2012, and it is a role you 23 still hold today? 24 A. That's correct. 25 Q. Can I go first, please, to paragraphs 6 to 12 of your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>
<p>1 statement. Here you cover what has been described in 2 the heading there, "Beechwood interaction, impressions 3 and disclosures". 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. This is in relation to your role as a social worker. 6 You say at paragraph 6, please, that you visited 7 Beechwood between 1972 and 1975 and again between 1977 8 and 1979. You state that the purpose of these visits 9 was to prepare social enquiry reports on the young 10 people remanded there by the juvenile court. 11 At paragraphs 8 and 9, you describe the organisation 12 and environment of Beechwood. 13 At paragraph 9, you state that the staff were mainly 14 men and mostly unqualified; some of them came from 15 a military service background. 16 As a young social worker visiting Beechwood at that 17 time, did you have any concerns about the composition of 18 the staff group, as to the quality of care that they 19 would provide children? 20 A. I think there was an air of neglect at Beechwood that 21 was borne out in the fabric, the furnishing, of 22 the building. I was concerned that young men, children, 23 were told what to do rather than listened to. And 24 I thought the focus was very much on individual problems 25 that the children had, rather than looking at the wider</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>	<p>1 context of their family, school and neighbourhood. 2 Q. In the light of those concerns, were they concerns that 3 you shared with anyone? 4 A. Over the years, I had a long discussion with colleagues 5 about the role of residential care. My own view, and 6 this wasn't -- 7 Q. Mr Tipping, I am just going to stop you there. My 8 question is directed as to whether or not you shared 9 your concerns about Beechwood at the time with anyone? 10 A. Yes, I did. 11 Q. You did? 12 A. I said that I thought it wasn't appropriate. 13 Q. Right. What did that mean, "appropriate"? 14 A. I thought young people were putting -- being put into 15 Beechwood unnecessarily, and they weren't getting the 16 care and attention that was necessary. 17 Q. Had you had contact or worked in any other residential 18 homes? 19 A. No, I've never worked in a residential setting. 20 Q. Had you visited, on behalf of children allocated to you, 21 other residential homes? 22 A. At that time, I visited other residential settings. 23 Q. How did they compare to Beechwood? 24 A. They were generally smaller, they were more family 25 orientated, but, I have to say, there were shortcomings</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 with some of them as well.</p> <p>2 Q. You say at paragraph 10 that whilst young people</p> <p>3 complained about its discipline and routine, no-one made</p> <p>4 complaints to you about physical or sexual abuse?</p> <p>5 A. That's correct.</p> <p>6 Q. What sort of complaints about discipline and routine did</p> <p>7 young people make, that you remember?</p> <p>8 A. They felt that they were pushed around, bullied a bit,</p> <p>9 and that they weren't appreciated.</p> <p>10 Q. When you say that these complaints were made to you by</p> <p>11 the young people there, were these children and young</p> <p>12 people who had been allocated to you?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. When you went to Beechwood, were you allowed access to</p> <p>15 the units generally, or did you meet your child or young</p> <p>16 person in a particular room?</p> <p>17 A. I met the children individually, by appointment,</p> <p>18 normally in one of two locations: there was a window</p> <p>19 seat that looked out over the garden that I used to use</p> <p>20 quite a lot; and there was a small office that was under</p> <p>21 the stairs as you came in through the main door.</p> <p>22 Q. In meeting the child or young person, was that a meeting</p> <p>23 that would be conducted on your own with him or her?</p> <p>24 A. Yes. I thought I was there to safeguard the children</p> <p>25 and make sure that the needs of the child were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 paramount, and I took the view that I needed to speak to</p> <p>2 them individually.</p> <p>3 Q. This is some time before the 1989 Children Act. The</p> <p>4 attitude or the approach that you have described, was</p> <p>5 that an approach shared by your social work colleagues?</p> <p>6 A. I don't recall discussing it with social work</p> <p>7 colleagues, to be perfectly honest, so I can't help you.</p> <p>8 Q. The complaints that you have described children making</p> <p>9 to you, did you act on those?</p> <p>10 A. I always said to the senior social worker who supervised</p> <p>11 me -- as you say, I was a young man at the time -- that</p> <p>12 I felt uncomfortable at Beechwood, and if I felt</p> <p>13 uncomfortable, as night followed day, I think the young</p> <p>14 people felt uncomfortable.</p> <p>15 Q. Mr Tipping, you had children complaining to you about</p> <p>16 the way they were being treated?</p> <p>17 A. Mmm.</p> <p>18 Q. They were complaining specifically rather than</p> <p>19 generally. Is that something you thought you should</p> <p>20 take forward as their social worker?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, and I took it forward with my senior social worker.</p> <p>22 Q. Do you know what the response to your doing so was?</p> <p>23 A. That this was how the system worked; the young people</p> <p>24 have been remanded there by the courts. In those days,</p> <p>25 there was still a view around that one could change</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>
<p>1 people's behaviour, young people's behaviour, by</p> <p>2 a short, sharp shock.</p> <p>3 Q. Would you feed that back to those who'd made the</p> <p>4 complaints?</p> <p>5 A. I would talk to them about being unhappy there and, for</p> <p>6 many of them, as I say in the statement, it was the</p> <p>7 first time they'd been away from home, many of them were</p> <p>8 very tearful.</p> <p>9 Q. Again, I'm not asking my questions very well. In</p> <p>10 relation to the complaints that had been made to you</p> <p>11 about how an individual was being treated, you took that</p> <p>12 up with your line manager, your line manager said,</p> <p>13 "Well, that's the way it goes". Did you then feed that</p> <p>14 back to the individual at the next visit?</p> <p>15 A. I used to say to the young people, "Look, you're here</p> <p>16 for three weeks whilst we get this report done. Let's</p> <p>17 see if we can make the best of it and get the best</p> <p>18 outcome for you".</p> <p>19 Q. We have heard evidence in this inquiry that those who</p> <p>20 were at Beechwood felt that they weren't able to speak</p> <p>21 to social workers because they felt they wouldn't be</p> <p>22 believed, and some feared that if they did say anything</p> <p>23 to social workers or to others, it would cause problems</p> <p>24 for them. Do you think that you were close enough to</p> <p>25 those children who were allocated to you for them to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>	<p>1 able to disclose to you things that were more serious?</p> <p>2 I'm not suggesting for a moment that the physical</p> <p>3 complaints that they made weren't serious, but of a more</p> <p>4 serious nature, such as sexual abuse?</p> <p>5 A. For many of the young people, I'd only met them once</p> <p>6 they'd been remanded to Beechwood. So the relationship</p> <p>7 was new, and one needed to develop it. But I have</p> <p>8 followed the course of the inquiry with interest and</p> <p>9 understand the barriers around restraint.</p> <p>10 Q. Two complainants who have provided evidence to the</p> <p>11 inquiry say that they were unable to make disclosures to</p> <p>12 you during your time as a social worker because they</p> <p>13 remember you as coming across as unapproachable. Do you</p> <p>14 have any comments on that?</p> <p>15 A. Well, I'm disappointed, sorry and apologise if that's</p> <p>16 the case.</p> <p>17 Q. Mr Tipping, from your experience both as a social worker</p> <p>18 and subsequently as a councillor at the county council,</p> <p>19 what do you think councillors can do to take the</p> <p>20 initiative to uncover institutional flaws and systemic</p> <p>21 abuse where it exists? What's the role of</p> <p>22 the councillor in that situation?</p> <p>23 A. The county council had a programme of rota visits, which</p> <p>24 I know the inquiry has looked at. My own view, when</p> <p>25 I was involved in it, was that it was next to useless.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 Q. Do you think -- or to what extent did councillors, in 2 your experience, show sufficient curiosity in wanting to 3 probe the extent of child sexual abuse in 4 Nottinghamshire? This is during your time as 5 a councillor. Was there sufficient critical scrutiny? 6 A. I was a member of the Social Services Committee for an 7 awful long time, and I can't recall any discussion at 8 the Social Services Committee around sexual abuse. 9 Q. Specifically around sexual abuse of children in care, 10 you can't recall that? 11 A. Absolutely. Not at all. 12 Q. The dates of your being a councillor, remind me, when 13 was that? 14 A. It was from 1981 to 1993. 15 Q. Can we turn, please, to your role as Police and Crime 16 Commissioner for Nottinghamshire. This is something you 17 set out between paragraphs 13 and 18. At paragraph 14, 18 you set out your key responsibilities. 19 A. Sure. 20 Q. This starts at the bottom of page 2 and we go over the 21 page to page 3, please. You are required to hold the 22 chief constable to account on behalf of the public for 23 the performance of the force; you are to be the 24 recipient of all funding related to policing; and you 25 are to publish every four years a police and crime plan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 Can we then go to paragraph 19, where you set out 2 there your general oversight of police investigations, 3 and this is, again, in your role as PCC? 4 A. Sure. 5 Q. You say in that first line: 6 "... I have discussed the allegations of abuse with 7 the chief constable on a regular basis." 8 How regularly do you meet with the chief constable? 9 A. I meet him every week, almost without exception. 10 I sometimes see him more than that. And, in between, 11 there are often telephone calls and texts. And the 12 meetings are -- have an agenda, they are minuted, there 13 is an action plan at the end of them. 14 Q. How are allegations of abuse presented to you during 15 such meetings? 16 A. Well, in two ways, really. A lot of survivors came to 17 see me, and one of the issues for me is that the 18 investigation and operation of the police is 19 essentially, in law, a matter for the chief constable. 20 But I would always talk to him about the people I'd met 21 and the allegations that they had made, and then beneath 22 that, Mr Sadd, I outlined some of the issues that 23 I thought were important that I discussed frequently 24 over quite a period of time with the chief constable. 25 Q. You do, and we are going to come to some of those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>
<p>1 issues. As the PCC, are you briefed about specific 2 investigations within Equinox, or only a broad 3 oversight? 4 A. Only a broad oversight. If a case is coming to court 5 that -- I would normally be told because there would be 6 some press coverage about it. 7 Q. On Monday this week, the inquiry heard evidence from 8 Detective Inspector Yvonne Dales. She gave evidence 9 about the understaffing of Operation Daybreak, the fact 10 that there were only four officers on the team, and no 11 full-time senior investigating officer. As the SIO of 12 Daybreak, Yvonne Dales herself could only devote one day 13 a week to the job, and that was throughout her tenure up 14 to 2015. Were you aware of the understaffing of 15 Daybreak described by Yvonne Dales? 16 A. I wasn't aware of the understaffing as described by 17 Yvonne Dales, but I was aware that there were tremendous 18 pressures on the enquiry and over a period of time, and 19 at a regular interval, I used to press the chief 20 constable around the amount of resource there. 21 Q. What were the pressures that you understood to be, 22 Mr Tipping? 23 A. Well, I was aware of a growing number of complaints. 24 I think DCI Dales said to you that it started off with 25 35. It's grown to more than 800 complaints,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>	<p>1 400 complainants, 600 suspects. So coming from a small 2 enquiry -- I think she talked with you about the HOLMES 3 mechanism, the major crime initiative. That wasn't 4 implemented to begin with. So as well as talking to the 5 chief constable, I generally keep my ears open, and 6 I felt that the operation probably was under-resourced 7 and wasn't slow to raise it with the chief constable not 8 on one occasion, but on several occasions. 9 Q. So under-resourced. Should one understand by that that 10 you were implicitly aware of the understaffing of 11 the operation? 12 A. I wasn't aware of the details of it, but I had 13 a feeling, talking to people, that more resources were 14 needed. 15 Q. In your conversations with the chief constable, was that 16 identified as an issue with the operation? 17 A. I was keen to make progress with the operation. The 18 chief constable has to make best use of his resources. 19 I'm not in a position to second-guess him, but I am in 20 a position to challenge him -- 21 Q. Sorry, Mr Tipping, my question to you -- I am going to 22 interrupt you. My question to you was, in the 23 conversations that you had with the chief constable, 24 were you aware or did he alert you to the fact that the 25 operation was understaffed?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. Do you think it is something in your role as PCC that</p> <p>3 you ought to have been aware of at the time?</p> <p>4 A. I think it would have been better had I have known how</p> <p>5 understaffed it was, but I always received an assurance</p> <p>6 that, although the resourcing was tight, it was</p> <p>7 manageable.</p> <p>8 Q. I did interrupt you, forgive me for doing that. I just</p> <p>9 wanted to get to that issue. You were speaking about</p> <p>10 your encounters with the chief constable. As a result</p> <p>11 of those encounters, what did you come away thinking --</p> <p>12 that this operation was in hand; that it was coping; or</p> <p>13 that it remained problematic?</p> <p>14 A. My impression was that it was coping and getting by.</p> <p>15 Q. And getting by?</p> <p>16 A. (Witness nods).</p> <p>17 Q. Is that good enough?</p> <p>18 A. I don't really think so, and as part of those</p> <p>19 discussions, there was an agreement that over a period</p> <p>20 of time more resource would go into Public Protection,</p> <p>21 which of course covers this particular area of work.</p> <p>22 I have to say, it took a long time for those resources</p> <p>23 to be identified and transferred across.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you get any sense, Mr Tipping, in your meetings with</p> <p>25 the chief constable, that Operation Daybreak in effect</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 was on the margins of police interest and activity?</p> <p>2 A. No, I took the view that the chief constable then,</p> <p>3 Chris Eyre, took the matter extremely seriously and was</p> <p>4 a high priority for him.</p> <p>5 Q. Did he discuss with you, at any stage, thoughts of</p> <p>6 closing down or winding down Operation Daybreak?</p> <p>7 A. No.</p> <p>8 Q. Paragraph 19 still, please. We go to the fourth bullet</p> <p>9 point on that page. You state that one of the issues</p> <p>10 you have raised with the chief constable is the concerns</p> <p>11 about Nottinghamshire Police's engagement with survivors</p> <p>12 and emerging survivor groups. That's in the first</p> <p>13 sentence of that fourth bullet point. Do you have that?</p> <p>14 A. Sure.</p> <p>15 Q. Mandy Coupland, from whom the inquiry is going to be</p> <p>16 hearing next this afternoon, states at paragraph 9 of</p> <p>17 her statement that the former Chief Constable of</p> <p>18 Nottinghamshire Police, Chris Eyre, refused to meet with</p> <p>19 her and child sexual abuse survivors, despite her having</p> <p>20 tried to arrange meetings through you. Do you recall</p> <p>21 Mandy Coupland's efforts to arrange such meetings?</p> <p>22 A. I don't recall Mandy Coupland herself requesting</p> <p>23 a meeting, but I was aware that a number of survivors</p> <p>24 wished to see the chief constable. The chief constable</p> <p>25 took the view, perhaps rightly, perhaps wrongly, that he</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>
<p>1 had other officers responsible for this area of work,</p> <p>2 that he wanted to have total oversight, and that he</p> <p>3 wasn't prepared to meet people, and this wasn't unique.</p> <p>4 This was a view he took right across the policing</p> <p>5 interests.</p> <p>6 Q. So should I understand correctly that he wasn't singling</p> <p>7 out this particular operation, it was the approach that</p> <p>8 he adopted to all ongoing police investigations at the</p> <p>9 time?</p> <p>10 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you raise with the chief constable any concerns</p> <p>12 about his non-engagement with Operation Daybreak</p> <p>13 survivors and complainants?</p> <p>14 A. I was aware of a number of complaints from survivors</p> <p>15 and, yes, we talked about them, but I was more</p> <p>16 concerned -- I was meeting survivors regularly. I was</p> <p>17 more concerned that a regular pattern of meetings</p> <p>18 between the police and the local authorities was set up.</p> <p>19 Q. So help me understand that. The evidence that the</p> <p>20 inquiry should understand is that you did raise it with</p> <p>21 the chief constable?</p> <p>22 A. Certainly.</p> <p>23 Q. His response was, "I don't get involved"?</p> <p>24 A. His response was, "I am in overall charge of</p> <p>25 Nottinghamshire Police. I delegate responsibilities to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>	<p>1 various other senior officers", and the point at issue</p> <p>2 between me and him was that I thought someone from</p> <p>3 a very senior level should be meeting the emerging</p> <p>4 survivors' groups regularly.</p> <p>5 Q. You say in the last bullet point of paragraph 19, in</p> <p>6 your discussions with the chief constable, you raised</p> <p>7 concerns about how many complaints of abuse would end up</p> <p>8 with court prosecutions, and you say in the second line</p> <p>9 there:</p> <p>10 "Given the nature of these complaints, it seemed to</p> <p>11 me that it was possible that a relatively low proportion</p> <p>12 would end up with a successful prosecution."</p> <p>13 What were the concerns that you had about the nature</p> <p>14 of the complaints?</p> <p>15 A. I didn't have any concerns about the nature of the</p> <p>16 complaints at all. What I was concerned about was the</p> <p>17 process. Some of these complaints went back</p> <p>18 40/50 years, there was no forensic third party evidence,</p> <p>19 and ultimately, in many cases, it would come down to</p> <p>20 a judgment of one person's word against another, and</p> <p>21 against that background, I thought that the chances of</p> <p>22 many successful prosecutions was pretty limited.</p> <p>23 Q. As part of your role as commissioner, do you have any</p> <p>24 involvement in reviewing police and CPS charging</p> <p>25 decisions?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

<p>1 A. No.</p> <p>2 Q. Sue Matthews, who gave evidence yesterday, is a CPS</p> <p>3 reviewing lawyer. She gave evidence to the effect about</p> <p>4 cases that she's decided to prosecute which were</p> <p>5 previously dismissed under earlier operations and</p> <p>6 investigations.</p> <p>7 Do you think in the case of Operation Daybreak there</p> <p>8 is a need for more cases that were previously dismissed</p> <p>9 to be revisited by the police and CPS now?</p> <p>10 A. I think there's always an opportunity to revisit cases</p> <p>11 where there's a reason to do it and there's new and</p> <p>12 sufficient evidence.</p> <p>13 Q. Again, coming back to the evidence that we will hear</p> <p>14 this afternoon from Mandy Coupland, she considers that</p> <p>15 enhanced training for officers on dealing with child</p> <p>16 sexual abuse claims should be provided.</p> <p>17 Do you believe the training currently in place for</p> <p>18 those working under Operation Equinox and in the</p> <p>19 Child Abuse Investigation Unit is sufficient?</p> <p>20 A. These are operational matters for the chief constable,</p> <p>21 not for me; but if you ask for a personal judgment, my</p> <p>22 judgment was that the early Operation Daybreak was, in</p> <p>23 effect, thrown together with people who were available</p> <p>24 at the time, and that the specialist nature of</p> <p>25 the operation required people who were better</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 professionally qualified.</p> <p>2 Q. When did you understand the point had been reached where</p> <p>3 those individuals were deployed to the operation?</p> <p>4 A. I'm not confident that until as recently as 12/24 months</p> <p>5 ago that that's been the case.</p> <p>6 Q. She further suggests a recommendation that training</p> <p>7 workshops for police run by survivors should be</p> <p>8 provided. Do you consider that there is any scope for</p> <p>9 that?</p> <p>10 A. I do. I think it's always important to listen to</p> <p>11 victims' voices and not to necessarily stand on</p> <p>12 professional laurels.</p> <p>13 Q. You say at the bottom of page 4 -- this is in relation</p> <p>14 to the final bullet point at paragraph 19, this is in</p> <p>15 discussion with the chief constable:</p> <p>16 "I thought it important that the police made it</p> <p>17 clear to survivors that their complaints were taken</p> <p>18 seriously and every effort was being made to investigate</p> <p>19 them successfully. Failure to obtain a prosecution did</p> <p>20 not imply that their allegations were untrue."</p> <p>21 The fact of your having that conversation with the</p> <p>22 chief constable, should the implication be that you were</p> <p>23 concerned that allegations were not being taken</p> <p>24 seriously?</p> <p>25 A. No, not at all. I was concerned that people were coming</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>
<p>1 forward, making allegations that appeared to me to be</p> <p>2 believable and substantive, but that might not, because</p> <p>3 of the lack of evidence, be successful in the court.</p> <p>4 I was very clear in my own mind that I wanted the</p> <p>5 survivors to be heard and believed.</p> <p>6 Q. Mr Tipping, the inquiry has heard accounts of the ways</p> <p>7 and extent to which the police kept survivors informed</p> <p>8 of their investigations into allegations of abuse,</p> <p>9 ranging from texts stating that investigations had been</p> <p>10 unsuccessful to visits to the home. Complainants say</p> <p>11 that they have not been kept informed about the progress</p> <p>12 of investigations. For example, one complainant, L17,</p> <p>13 stated that they had provided a statement to the police</p> <p>14 in 2011 and, having received no update, she assumed that</p> <p>15 nothing was done. Does your oversight of police</p> <p>16 investigations extend to overseeing the way in which</p> <p>17 police maintain contact with survivors?</p> <p>18 A. No, it doesn't. It's an operational matter for the</p> <p>19 police. But, again, it's an issue that I'm interested</p> <p>20 in. Again, my own view that isn't universally agreed is</p> <p>21 that the police spend a lot of time looking at the</p> <p>22 culprit and not sufficient time looking at the victim,</p> <p>23 but, in fairness, over the years, the balance has</p> <p>24 changed.</p> <p>25 Q. I imagine you will say to me you have already answered</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>	<p>1 this question, but as the PCC, have you taken any steps,</p> <p>2 notwithstanding the operational observation you make, to</p> <p>3 discuss issues relating to communication with</p> <p>4 complainants?</p> <p>5 A. Not with complainants -- well, yes, I have, because</p> <p>6 people complain to me about it and we have had an open</p> <p>7 discussion about it. But the real discussion was with</p> <p>8 colleagues, particularly via the chief constable, around</p> <p>9 not keeping people informed.</p> <p>10 Q. The next question, Mr Tipping, is one I am asked to put</p> <p>11 to you on behalf of one of the core participants to this</p> <p>12 inquiry.</p> <p>13 A. Sure.</p> <p>14 Q. Do police insurers have any influence over the response</p> <p>15 of the police to historic complaints of abuse?</p> <p>16 A. I have never had that question raised with me before,</p> <p>17 and I don't believe it's a reality.</p> <p>18 Q. Paragraph 22, please, over the page, page 5. There you</p> <p>19 describe the role of Kevin Dennis and say that he</p> <p>20 attends meetings --</p> <p>21 A. Sure.</p> <p>22 Q. -- with the strategic management group and survivor</p> <p>23 support meetings. One role is "to ensure" -- the second</p> <p>24 line, paragraph 22:</p> <p>25 "... to provide assistance and ensure that the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 activities and any lessons learnt are fed into and 2 aligned with my intentions for the future commissioning 3 of services for victims and survivors of sexual abuse." 4 That's the quote there. What are those intentions, 5 Mr Tipping? 6 A. My intention is to provide a better service to victims 7 of sexual abuse than they have had before, and that's 8 spelt out in detail later on in my witness statement. 9 Q. Before we get to that, do you think there's still some 10 way to go? 11 A. I think there's an awful long way to go, and if I have 12 the opportunity, Mr Sadd, later on, I will discuss it 13 with you. 14 Q. From paragraph 23 onwards, you discuss the development 15 of support for victims and survivors of abuse. 16 In paragraph 24, you say at the bottom there, the 17 last sentence, the penultimate line: 18 "The strategy includes an objective to ensure that 19 the services meet the needs of victims and survivors." 20 What have you identified as the challenges in 21 ensuring those needs are met? 22 A. Well, let me start at the beginning. When I first 23 became involved and met many of the survivors, they 24 didn't know initially where services were available; 25 and, secondly, the feedback from them -- and, again, we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 can discuss this in more detail, if you require -- was 2 that those services were inadequate. 3 Q. I am not in any way minimising those challenges, but is 4 that the extent of the challenges? 5 A. Well, the challenge is to provide counselling and 6 support to victims, which I think may in some cases be 7 necessarily over a long period of time, and one of 8 the challenges that is around is that all public bodies 9 are living in an age of austerity and persuading 10 partners to provide sufficient funding is challenging. 11 Q. Paragraph 27, please, page 6. You set out over the next 12 two pages what you have identified as what you would 13 describe as the key milestones achieved in the 14 development of support for victims and survivors of 15 sexual abuse that your office has contributed towards. 16 We see at the first date there, just under the second 17 line of paragraph 27, starts with September 2016. 18 A. Yes. 19 Q. What is your assessment of the state of provision of 20 support and funding for counselling prior 21 to September 2016? 22 A. It was very limited. There were a number of voluntary 23 organisations, third sector organisations, providing 24 some support. The view of the NHS was that survivors 25 should go to their GP, the GP should then refer them on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>
<p>1 to what's called IAPS -- Improving Access to 2 Psychotherapy Services. These are short courses for six 3 weeks. Some of them wouldn't accept survivors of sexual 4 abuse. Many survivors said to me after the six weeks 5 they still needed help, and going on from that, the only 6 other service available via the NHS was via the 7 Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust, the Mental Health 8 Trust, who had a long waiting list of over 12 months, 9 and that is broadly the situation where we are at still. 10 Q. Do you understand, in those circumstances where IAPS 11 wouldn't accept some of the sexual abuse survivors, why 12 that was the case? 13 A. There's been a prolonged discussion between me and the 14 CCGs around IAPS. The CCGs -- 15 Q. That's the Clinical Commissioning Group? 16 A. I'm sorry, yes, the Clinical Commissioning Groups 17 believe that IAPS provide a first-step service into 18 counselling, but, as I say, some of the IAP providers 19 don't believe that sexual advice counselling is 20 appropriate through a six-week course. 21 Q. These are points that you have identified. We know 22 that, effectively, individuals were coming forward with 23 their complaints of, initially, physical abuse and then 24 it grew from 2011 to complaints and allegations of 25 sexual abuse. Here, September 2016, you set out some of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>	<p>1 those milestones. Do you have any view as to why the 2 provision of support was as limited as you describe up 3 until that date? 4 A. I think there are two issues. First of all, I don't 5 think people understood the scale of the problem, and we 6 have talked about that a little bit before. But I guess 7 one of the things that became apparent to me later on -- 8 and I should have spotted it earlier -- is that, 9 traditionally, support for survivors of sexual violence 10 was for women and, almost by definition, a large 11 proportion of people who had been in the care system 12 were young men, and the level of provision for them was 13 minimal. 14 Q. What you list at pages 6 and 7, should it be the 15 inquiry's understanding that that is in addition to any 16 provision for funding of counselling by the councils? 17 A. The funding of the council -- by the council has been 18 very limited indeed. I think you heard from Mr Edwards 19 yesterday that just a handful of counselling services 20 had been made available via Nottinghamshire 21 County Council. In the city, it was slightly different, 22 in that we have what's called the Crime and Disorder 23 Partnership where we all contribute money, and, as 24 a result of that, there's some money available via the 25 councils, via the CDP, for counselling.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 Q. We can see, looking down the page at page 6 and over the 2 page 7, that at different moments you secure funding for 3 particular issues. So we can see April 2017: 4 "I agreed £55.5k of funding ... to pay for immediate 5 access ..." 6 How difficult was it for you to secure that funding? 7 A. The budget for both myself and Nottinghamshire Police 8 has been reducing, and reducing very substantially, but 9 I took the view, talking to colleagues -- and we 10 mentioned Kevin Dennis earlier on, who has been a real 11 advocate and partner on this, that it's something we had 12 to do, and so we found the funds. 13 Q. At paragraph 29, please, on page 8, you set out the 14 support now available in the way that you have just 15 described. Can we move on to paragraph 33? In 16 paragraph 33, you say that in the months after becoming 17 PCC in November 2012, it became increasingly clear to 18 you that concerns raised by an increasing number of 19 survivors needed to be properly and better addressed. 20 You state you were concerned about the poor 21 relationships that existed between survivors, 22 Nottingham City and Nottingham County and 23 Nottinghamshire Police. You say that "exchanges were at 24 times abusive and destructive". That's in the last 25 sentence of paragraph 33. Were you aware at the time of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 any measures taken by the councils to defuse the 2 tension? 3 A. That period of time was extremely difficult. 4 Q. Pausing there for a moment, the period of time we are 5 talking, just put a date on it; could you help the 6 inquiry with that? 7 A. About 2013 into 2014. That period of time was extremely 8 difficult. Many of the survivors felt in different ways 9 and different strengths that they weren't being listened 10 to and believed by the councils, and it seemed to me 11 that we had to work hard to build bridges rather than 12 barriers. 13 Q. I'm reminded, Mr Tipping, forgive me, that I missed two 14 questions that are sought to be asked in relation to the 15 funding of 55,500. You say this was to continue to pay 16 for immediate access to counselling. Are you able to 17 help the inquiry by clarifying how much of 18 the counselling to which you refer in your statement is 19 face-to-face counselling? 20 A. Most of it is face-to-face counselling of that £55,000. 21 Q. Do you have a view as to whether counselling via the 22 telephone works? 23 A. I have a view. I don't have a professional background 24 in this. 25 Q. No, I understand that. What's your non-professional</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>
<p>1 view? 2 A. I think it's ridiculous. 3 Q. We were talking about the tensions, and I'm sorry to 4 have gone back to an issue that I omitted. 5 Do you have a view as to the extent to which police 6 and Social Services have historically failed to properly 7 co-ordinate response to allegations of child sexual 8 abuse? 9 A. Well, the inquiry has heard a lot about the incident at 10 Broxtowe. I was vaguely aware of it. But my impression 11 was that, generally, there was a commitment for the 12 councils and the police to work together. That doesn't 13 mean that there weren't problems, there were problems 14 around a number of issues, but, generally, the desire 15 was to resolve them and move forward. 16 Q. To what extent, and to the extent that you are able to 17 answer this, do you think that that approach affected 18 responses to allegations of sexual abuse in care? 19 A. Some of the survivors believe that there is collusion 20 between the police and the councils, really because of 21 the strategic management group where all the parties are 22 engaged. I have taken a real interest in this, and I am 23 confident that individual cases haven't been discussed 24 in those areas, and I am confident because I have spent 25 a lot of time talking to the chief constable about this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>	<p>1 and not contaminating evidence and leading to collusion. 2 Q. You state at paragraph 35, please, this is still at 3 page 9, that you formed the view that some form of 4 independent review was the best and necessary way 5 forward. This is to resolve those tensions, is that 6 right, is that what you are describing? 7 A. (Witness nods). 8 Q. You state that you discussed this with partners and more 9 extensively with the then chief constable Chris Eyre. 10 In September 2014, you made a statement to the press in 11 which you suggested that an independent review of 12 allegations made about Beechwood and other children's 13 homes and Nottinghamshire Police should be carried out 14 "as soon as practically possible". Although we don't 15 need to go to it, we have a copy of the statement that 16 you made. It's at tab 6. It is a relatively short 17 statement. Just quoting from two paragraphs, at the 18 bottom: 19 "I know that the public wants some reassurance that 20 everything possible is being done to ensure that any 21 claim, whether this is historical or current, is fully 22 investigated and will never be swept under the carpet 23 and any lessons are learnt. The work to protect 24 children and keep them safe is a fundamental element of 25 our society. In my view, an independent review is the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 only way to do that." 2 I want to turn next to an Operation Daybreak Gold 3 group meeting in December 2014. I know you have only 4 just been provided with that minute this morning. 5 A. Sure. 6 Q. But you have had a chance to read it? 7 A. I have seen it. 8 Q. The document is at NCC00080 and should be at tab 10 of 9 your bundle. 10 A. Yes, I have got it. 11 Q. I would ask you, please, to turn to page 3, item 8, 12 halfway down the page. Do you see where it says 13 "Revised communication strategy"? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. We can see four lines down: 16 "Anthony May ..." 17 Who is Anthony May? 18 A. Anthony May is the chief executive of Nottinghamshire 19 County Council. 20 Q. "... raised the issue of the PCC speaking to the media 21 without consultation with the group." 22 Do you know if the issue was being raised here in 23 relation to the September 2014 statement that we have 24 just -- 25 A. There had been a series of meetings, not only involving</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 Anthony May, but the chief executive of the city council 2 and the leader of the city and county council. 3 Q. The series of meetings was in the wake of your 4 statement; is that what you're saying? 5 A. Before my statement. I think if you look at my 6 statement, you will see that I say that the leader of 7 the city council and the leader of the county council 8 agree this way forward. 9 Q. Is there any criticism implicit in that record in the 10 note that we are looking at? 11 A. I think there's a lot of criticism. 12 Q. Why was that criticism being made, if you say, as you 13 did in September 2014, that this was being made with the 14 agreement of the councils? 15 A. I think the councils felt I was being pushy and 16 presumption. I think the councils, as I said in other 17 parts of my evidence, had anxieties about an independent 18 inquiry. 19 Q. Do you know what those anxieties were? Were they being 20 voiced to you? 21 A. Yes, they were being voiced to me. Again, the inquiry 22 has heard a discussion about, are apologies really 23 necessary, what has happened; a denial, really, I think 24 of the scale and seriousness of the problem. And, in 25 addition -- again, it's something that the panel will be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p>
<p>1 very familiar with -- people are concerned about 2 reputational images. The City of Nottingham had a very 3 tough time 20 years ago around violent crime. People 4 are very keen, I think, to protect and enhance the image 5 of the city. 6 Q. Do you think that that should be at the expense of 7 investigating how children in care have been treated? 8 A. I think I have made my position clear. 9 Q. Following this meeting that we are looking at now, 10 December 2014, was your relationship with the councils 11 permanently soured? 12 A. No, it wasn't permanently soured. A sign of a good 13 relationship is that you can have discussions and keep 14 on talking. But one of the reasons that Kevin Dennis is 15 on the senior management group is that it was him rather 16 than me. 17 Q. Paragraph 38. You say that you were aware of 18 the establishment of this inquiry. 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. You were involved in discussions about Nottinghamshire 21 becoming one of the investigations for the inquiry. At 22 paragraph 40 you state that some of the survivors feel 23 that the three local case studies selected are not 24 sufficiently comprehensive. 25 A. Sure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p>	<p>1 Q. Do you feel that there will be a need for some sort of 2 further review about child sexual abuse in 3 Nottinghamshire once this strand of the inquiry is 4 concluded? 5 A. I think there will be a demand for it. But I have 6 followed the inquiry's proceedings with interest, and it 7 is clear to me that the inquiry has looked further than 8 allegations just at Beechwood, in foster care and 9 between children in care. I think -- well, we will see 10 what the final report brings, but the indications are 11 that there is going to be a fairly comprehensive report. 12 But I do think there will be a temptation for survivors 13 to say, "We would like more", and, as I say in my 14 evidence, it would be helpful in the inquiry's final 15 report to give some -- for the inquiry to give some 16 indication about how that might best be taken forward. 17 Q. Paragraph 42, please. From that paragraph onwards, you 18 set out the response to various police inspection 19 reports -- 20 A. Sure. 21 Q. -- and you discuss the role of the PCC in providing 22 scrutiny. 23 A. Sure. 24 Q. At paragraph 41, you state that in 2014 -- I think that 25 should be paragraph 42. You state that in 2014, HMC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 inspected the child protection work of every police 2 force in England and Wales. Nottinghamshire Police were 3 inspected in September 2014, and the report, which we 4 don't need to go to, is at tab 7. That report raised 5 concerns about police attendance at Child Protection 6 Conferences. 7 A. Sure. 8 Q. One of the recommendations was that, within three 9 months, Nottinghamshire Police undertake a review to 10 ensure that they were fulfilling their statutory 11 responsibilities as set out in Working Together and 12 that, at a minimum, this should include attendance at 13 and contribution to initial Child Protection 14 Conferences. 15 Then we go, please, to paragraph 53 on page 12, 16 please, of your statement. You say there: 17 "On 4th February 2018, HMIC published its 18 post-inspection review report into child protection in 19 Nottinghamshire ..." 20 If we could bring that up, please, it's NTP001512. 21 That's tab 9 of your bundle. Could we go to page 7, 22 please. There we see at the top under "Summary of 23 post-inspection review findings" -- do you see that on 24 screen? 25 A. Sure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 Q. "Inspectors were disappointed to find that police 2 attendance at initial Child Protection Conferences had 3 not improved." 4 What is your understanding of why no action had been 5 taken following the February 2015 report? 6 A. I think my understanding was that the 7 Nottinghamshire Police didn't fully embrace the findings 8 of the 2014 study. They thought it was unfair and 9 misjudged and didn't pay sufficient attention to 10 providing the reports and actions that were necessary in 11 the three and six months that were asked for by the 12 inspectorate. 13 Q. Have those concerns now been dealt with? 14 A. I hope they have been dealt with. As you will see later 15 in my evidence, Mr Sadd, I have taken some rather strong 16 steps, I think the force would say, to ensure that the 17 force are compliant. Let me give you an example: we 18 took the 2015 report, pulled out all the criticisms of 19 the Nottinghamshire Police, they amounted to more than 20 60. We gave them to the chief constable and the force 21 and they were required to go through, step by step, 22 every recommendation. 23 In addition, I took the step of asking Mazars, who 24 are the internal auditors for Nottinghamshire Police, to 25 look at the report and that template and for them to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>
<p>1 comment on it too. 2 I know, because my office is involved with it, that 3 the force have what's called a Programme 4 Action -- "4" 4 followed by "action" -- and those recommendations are 5 tracked. I also know that the deputy chief constable 6 has a series of work streams to resolve these issues. 7 The force has just been inspected again. As these 8 things work, I don't think the inspectorate report will 9 be published until the spring of next year. One doesn't 10 want to be presumptuous, but I hope, I very much hope, 11 that we will see an improvement in performance by 12 Nottinghamshire Police. 13 MR SADD: Mr Tipping, I have nearly finished, but I wonder 14 if you would give me one moment. 15 Chair, I know I am meant to stop at 3.00 pm. I have 16 literally three questions to ask. Are you happy that 17 I continue? 18 THE CHAIR: Yes. 19 MR SADD: Mr Tipping, forgive that interruption. 20 A. No, that's fine. 21 Q. I want to turn, then, please, to the HMIC PEEL Report -- 22 PEEL standing for police effectiveness, efficiency and 23 legitimacy -- which we can find at tab 5 of your bundle. 24 The report was published in March 2017. 25 A. '16 -- sorry, '17, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>	<p>1 Q. At page 4 of the report, which we don't need to put up 2 on screen, it is explained that the overall question 3 that the report inspection sought to address was, "How 4 effective is the force at keeping people safe and 5 reducing crime?". The report explains that, to answer 6 this question, HMIC explores five core questions, which 7 are set out at page 4. One of those questions is: 8 "How effective is the force at protecting those who 9 are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?" 10 At page 7 of the report, the overall judgment in 11 relation to that question was, "Requires improvement", 12 and in the paragraph dealing with that, it quotes: 13 "The force's response to vulnerable people is 14 inadequate because of unacceptable delays in responding 15 to some high-risk incidents." 16 We see under "Overall summary", the third question 17 down: 18 "How effective is the force at protecting those who 19 are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?" 20 We see the force is graded as "inadequate". 21 Included in that assessment, would that be an 22 assessment of the support provided to victims of 23 historical child sexual abuse? 24 A. No, the report mainly focused on domestic violence. But 25 one of the significant things of the report, and it's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 something that the inquiry has talked about at length, 2 is the importance of talking directly to children by 3 themselves, and the force has made progress now but 4 still showed shortcomings at that time. 5 Q. Did the findings come as a surprise to you? 6 A. Yes, I was surprised. I was surprised, disappointed and 7 more than a little irritated, in that it had been made 8 very clear through a succession of HMIC reports that 9 there needed to be improvements in this area. I think 10 the force is now on track, but I wouldn't want to 11 presume the outcome of the next PEEL Report, which, as 12 I say, will be published in the spring of next year. 13 Q. I know you say you don't get involved in operational 14 issues. 15 A. Sure. 16 Q. What influence have you had, if any, in seeing that that 17 is remedied? 18 A. I have had a lot of discussions not just with the chief 19 constable, but with other senior officers in the post. 20 I note that Chief Superintendent Rob Gregory has been 21 here throughout the proceedings -- 22 Q. I think it is Rob Griffin. 23 A. Griffin, sorry. You're pushing me too hard. 24 Rob Griffin has been here throughout. He's taken 25 a major lead in the force. I have to say, Mr Sadd, he</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 is well respected by the victims. They don't always 2 agree with him, but there is a good and strong 3 relationship. 4 MR SADD: Mr Tipping, those are my questions. Chair, thank 5 you for that extra time. Do you or the panel have any 6 questions? 7 THE CHAIR: Yes. Ms Sharpling? 8 Questions by THE PANEL 9 MS SHARPLING: Thank you, Mr Tipping, just a couple of 10 questions from me, if I may. Does your office, or does 11 the force, conduct victim satisfaction surveys? 12 A. Yes, it does. 13 MS SHARPLING: Would they include the victims and survivors 14 of child sexual abuse? 15 A. It's across the range, and we have just been looking at 16 satisfaction rates for victims of domestic violence and 17 I'm pleased to say that the satisfaction rate is high 18 and improving. 19 MS SHARPLING: Can you break down the satisfaction figures 20 in relation to the victims and survivors of child sexual 21 abuse? 22 A. I think the figures -- the numbers will be far too small 23 for us to do that, but I'm more than happy to go away 24 and look at it and see whether we can supply some 25 information.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>
<p>1 MS SHARPLING: That would be most helpful, thank you, 2 Mr Tipping. 3 Another question from me, if I may: you say in your 4 statement that you monitor crimes committed against 5 children, specifically serious sexual offences against 6 children and the positive outcome rate for these crimes. 7 Do you collect specific data on this area? 8 A. Yes. 9 MS SHARPLING: What are the positive outcome rates? 10 A. I'd have to look at what the positive outcome rates are, 11 but, clearly, we come from a low base rate and we need 12 to do far better than we are at the moment. 13 MS SHARPLING: It would be helpful to receive that data, if 14 you could send it to the solicitor to this inquiry. 15 A. Sure. Of course. 16 MS SHARPLING: Thank you very much. That's all I have to 17 ask. 18 THE CHAIR: Sir Malcolm? 19 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Thank you, Mr Tipping. Just one 20 short question, going back to something you said in 21 response to an oral question from Mr Sadd right at the 22 beginning, when talking about rota visits. 23 A. Yes. 24 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: You described them as "next to 25 useless".</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 PROF SIR MALCOLM EVANS: Could you just elaborate briefly on 3 why you consider them next to useless? 4 A. I was a member of the Social Services Committee for many 5 years, and every couple of months, I would receive 6 a list, a very short list, actually, of establishments 7 to visit during that period, and I would go with 8 a couple of colleagues. 9 First of all, we gave notice of when we were going; 10 secondly -- and, again, this came up in the evidence 11 this morning -- it was pretty pointless going to 12 children's establishments during the day because they 13 weren't there; and, actually, the value I took out of 14 the rota visits was when we visited residential homes 15 for the elderly, where there was the possibility of more 16 interaction and a more useful outcome. 17 THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. We have no further 18 questions. Thank you, Mr Tipping. 19 A. Thank you. 20 (The witness withdrew) 21 MR SADD: Chair, what time would you like to resume? 22 THE CHAIR: We will return at 3.20 pm. Thank you. 23 (3.05 pm) 24 (A short break) 25 (3.21 pm)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 MR SADD: Chair, today's last witness is Mandy Coupland and 2 her statement reference is INQ002609. 3 MS MANDY COUPLAND (sworn) 4 Examination by MR SADD 5 MR SADD: Ms Coupland, good afternoon. You have provided 6 two statements to the inquiry. The first is dated 7 3 October 2018, and you provided a second statement to 8 the inquiry which is dated 23 October 2018. At the time 9 that you provided the statements, were you content that 10 they set out the truth, as far as you can remember? 11 A. Yes, I do. 12 Q. I understand that there is certainly one correction that 13 you want to make, and it is in relation -- can we go to 14 that? It is paragraph 21, please, at page 6 of your 15 statement, three paragraphs down. Do you have that? 16 A. Yes, I do. 17 Q. It is in relation to -- three lines up from the bottom, 18 you say: 19 "This happened after the multi-agency meeting 20 arranged a listening event at which between 70 and 100 21 survivors attended." 22 There is a correction you'd like to make there; is 23 that right? 24 A. Yes, that is correct. I'd like to just say that I'm not 25 exactly sure of those numbers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 Q. Shall we put "about"? 2 A. "About", yes. 3 Q. Thank you. Any other corrections? 4 A. No, there's no others. 5 Q. The panel have a copy of your statements, and these 6 statements will be, over the next few days, uploaded 7 onto the investigation website. I'm not going to take 8 you through your statements line by line. We are going 9 to look at specific topics which I think have been 10 identified with you, and I am going to ask you questions 11 related to those topics. It may be that we also look at 12 some documents together? 13 A. Okay. 14 Q. Can we go, please, to paragraphs 14 to 23 of your 15 statement. That starts at page 4. You explain from 16 paragraph 14 about the child sexual abuse survivors 17 group. You are one of the cofounders, with 18 Mickey Summers and David Hollas as the chair; is that 19 right? 20 A. That's correct. 21 Q. What's the overriding aim of the group? 22 A. The overriding aim of the group is to bring -- is to get 23 justice for survivors and get people around the table to 24 make change, and we are a signposting group and signpost 25 people to the correct services as and when needed, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>
<p>1 also take issues forward of other survivors. 2 Q. Ms Coupland, in that paragraph, you say: 3 "The structure of the group is relatively 4 informal..." 5 This is the first line. Do you have that? 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. "... and we probably have approximately 70 survivors who 8 engage with the group." 9 You meet around four times a year to share 10 information about this inquiry, progress and issues that 11 need addressing with the councils, police or other 12 authorities. That's over at page 15. 13 Is the group, as far as you know, subject to all 14 sorts of issues of confidentiality between members of 15 the group, made up of complainants of peer-on-peer abuse 16 as well as those who complain of sexual abuse in 17 residential or foster care? Would you be aware of that 18 or is that something that you wouldn't be aware of? 19 A. I wouldn't be aware of all that. 20 Q. You explain at paragraph 16, please, that you have set 21 some ground rules for these meetings which you call the 22 three Ws. What are those Ws? 23 A. In meetings, we try to keep confidentiality of 24 individual cases due to litigation, civil claims and 25 other matters, and the three W rule is we don't talk who</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>	<p>1 we was abused by, when we was abused and where. 2 Q. You say, as you have described now, that you enforce 3 this rule because you don't want to prejudice, also, 4 ongoing police investigations or prosecutions? 5 A. That's correct. 6 Q. Is this also because you are keen to avoid any 7 suggestion of collusion between your members; is that 8 right? 9 A. That's correct. 10 Q. Paragraph 18, please. You say the group now has 11 multi-agency meetings once a quarter with 12 representatives from the police, the PCC and the 13 councils attending. At paragraph 20, over the page, 14 please, to page 6, you believe the meetings have had 15 some success. Do you have it, paragraph 20? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. You say you believe the meetings have had some success. 18 You give some examples of changes that the police have 19 made as a result of the meetings. At paragraph 22, so 20 at the bottom of page 6, you say a sexual violence 21 manager has been appointed in the PCC's office because 22 you identified a gap? 23 A. Yes, that's correct. 24 Q. What further progress do you hope to make through these 25 multi-agency meetings?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 A. Well, the thing is, we need to get collective views from 2 various survivors. So the more meetings we have, 3 obviously the more groups that get involved with these 4 meetings, the more of a wider spectrum we are going to 5 get of what's needed to change the services in 6 Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.</p> <p>7 Q. From that, the panel can understand that that is one of 8 the focuses of your group, is to ensure adequate 9 provision of services?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Paragraph 23, please, page 7. You set out a list of 12 practical steps that you take for complainants. It's 13 a detailed list. I'm not going to read it all out. But 14 one can see, for instance, by way of example, the fourth 15 bullet point down, paragraph 23:</p> <p>16 "I help provide other forms of support to families 17 as well as survivors. For example, sometimes they need 18 someone to attend medical appointments with them, to 19 talk about their issues and help advocate for specific 20 mental health provision; for example, for them to be 21 referred to the mental health crisis team or for 22 counselling. It really is a full-time job, albeit 23 unpaid, and I very much want to try and help survivors 24 in the most practical way possible."</p> <p>25 Paragraph 25, please. You provide the inquiry with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 your views on barriers to reporting. You identify, 2 first-off -- this is something that you pick up in your 3 second statement, I should say. You identify a lack of 4 trust. That's the first bullet point. It may be 5 obvious to you, given the number of survivors that you 6 work with and have met, but why do you think that those 7 who have been abused in care might not find it easy to 8 trust those in authority?</p> <p>9 A. Because they have been constantly let down by police and 10 councils and other services.</p> <p>11 Q. When you say, "Constantly let down", do you mean as 12 children and young people, or now, or both?</p> <p>13 A. Both.</p> <p>14 Q. You give as a second reason shame and guilt. The third 15 bullet point -- sorry, the fourth bullet point: 16 "Fear -- [that] disclosing may cause the perpetrator 17 to come back into their lives and harm them." 18 By that, do you mean when they are children or when 19 the complainant is an adult?</p> <p>20 A. Well, it was in both cases. As they were children and 21 then as they grew up, they were frightened that 22 obviously, when they gave evidence into the inquiry and 23 things were named again, that the perpetrator might come 24 back and try to intimidate them, because some of them 25 have now either served a sentence or they're still out</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>
<p>1 there.</p> <p>2 Q. You give another example: fear that family members might 3 abandon them?</p> <p>4 A. That's correct. That has happened, where the people 5 have disclosed, the families don't believe them and then 6 it's split families up and the survivor is left alone 7 then.</p> <p>8 Q. Does it have an impact, the disclosure of sexual abuse, 9 on relationships, on partnerships?</p> <p>10 A. Oh, yes, definitely. You can -- you normally find that 11 a lot of survivors have relationship devastation all the 12 way through their lives, leaving a trail. A lot of 13 partners don't understand, and also some survivors don't 14 always disclose to their partners because of the shame 15 and how they feel about themselves, and a lot of things 16 that go along with those barriers are they're scared to 17 tell their partners because they might leave them, they 18 feel worthless because they feel less of a person 19 because of what's happened, some feel vulnerable, 20 embarrassed, judged. They feel angry. And a lot of 21 people also don't disclose because they can also be 22 targeted in different ways, which is mainly with their 23 extended family, when they have children, they're 24 frightened their children might be removed. That's 25 another reason as well and that impacts them because</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>	<p>1 they feel as though they can't speak out because they -- 2 they feel as though they're going to be judged as 3 a parent because there's a bit of a stigma around 4 survivors that, for some reason, with some councils, 5 people go on to be -- that have had children might go on 6 to abuse their own children, which is -- I have found, 7 dealing with my own group, it is totally the opposite. 8 They become overprotective parents.</p> <p>9 Q. You have just mentioned something that I was going to 10 ask you about.</p> <p>11 A. Sorry.</p> <p>12 Q. No, no, you have confirmed something. But those 13 experiences that you describe as barriers, are those 14 ones that you've garnered from the membership of your 15 group? "Garnered", sorry, that you have collected from 16 members of your group"?</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Can we look, please, at paragraph 26 on the same page, 19 where you talk there of resources. You describe how 20 a severe lack of resources in the city and the county 21 affects policing, access to advice on housing and 22 benefits and mental health support. 23 Do you think that that in turn prevents complainants 24 from making disclosure?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, because they keep opening their wounds and then</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>

<p>1 nothing happens, or they're put on waiting lists that 2 are far too long or they are given a service that is not 3 fit for purpose, to be honest. Sometimes it can be 4 a short spell of counselling, which is not acceptable to 5 anybody, because within -- I think it is about six weeks 6 that some of the counselling is. By the time they have 7 opened all their wounds, the counselling is more or less 8 closed. So a lot of people won't come forward because 9 they don't feel as though the service is good enough. 10 I'm not saying that things haven't changed a little bit, 11 because they have.</p> <p>12 Q. By saying that they have changed a little bit, changed 13 for the better?</p> <p>14 A. There's been a slight change but there's still a lot 15 more resources needed and a lot more money needs 16 injecting into this service, and the waiting lists are 17 far too long.</p> <p>18 Q. We read at the top of page 9, please, the first line 19 there, what you have described you say needs to be 20 better understood by the authorities. What more could 21 the authorities do to understand this?</p> <p>22 A. Sorry, I'm not sure exactly where you are.</p> <p>23 Q. That's all right. We have gone to page 9 and we are 24 looking at the top of the page. So this is above 25 "Impact". Do you have that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 A. Mine hasn't got pages.</p> <p>2 Q. Can you find paragraph 27? Just above there, there are 3 two lines.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. We are reading from the previous page, we are reading 6 over. I will read what it says on the previous page: 7 "It is very difficult to disclose something so 8 personal and painful when you are street homeless or you 9 are worried about where your next meal is coming from or 10 you are in the midst of an addiction spiral. This needs 11 to be better understood by the authorities." 12 My question was directed to, how could the 13 authorities achieve better understanding of that?</p> <p>14 A. I think if they understand the survivors' background of 15 what they suffer with, which is sometimes some suffer 16 with challenging behaviours, mental health issues, 17 homelessness, poor education. So sometimes people are 18 poorly educated and they don't understand what's 19 actually being said to them because they weren't 20 actually given an education at any point in care, as we 21 have heard from evidence. Obviously some people have 22 got addictions and they suffer to understand. So 23 I think when people are being seen in the council, they 24 need to realise the whole background of a survivor, how 25 they have been affected, and be patient with them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 162</p>
<p>1 I think the problem is, there's not enough empathy 2 towards survivors when they actually go to get any kind 3 of help. They're judged on their first appearance and 4 how they are, where, really, underneath is an inner 5 child that's quite scared. I hope that answers your 6 question.</p> <p>7 Q. On the same page, please, under the word "Impact" -- do 8 you have that?</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. You describe, and the inquiry has heard, the serious 11 impact that child sexual abuse has on complainants 12 themselves, and you say that this reaches further. 13 Indeed, you have described how it reaches beyond the 14 individuals themselves.</p> <p>15 At paragraph 28, you deal with the circumstances 16 around the death of a complainant which you were 17 involved with, and we will come on to that. You also 18 say that you have personally had to support around 19 20 complainants who have made serious attempts on their 20 lives, requiring hospital treatment, and you say at 21 paragraph 29, just at the bottom of that page, that this 22 is, as you describe it, a massive issue. Do you see 23 that?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, it is a massive issue.</p> <p>25 Q. What do you think can be done in response to that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 163</p>	<p>1 particular issue?</p> <p>2 A. To be honest, when a survivor is in CCPTSD, which is its 3 most chronic state, and other psychotic episodes that 4 they can go through, when we take them to A&E and we try 5 to get them put under the crisis team, they're left to 6 wait for hours and hours and hours. This doesn't help 7 their mental state. They're not always in an 8 environment that is therapeutic, they are in an A&E ward 9 which is surrounded by lots of other people, where 10 sometimes survivors don't want to be and they get very 11 agitated and some even walk out without even getting 12 help, even though they're suicidal sometimes.</p> <p>13 To be honest, the crisis teams are very, very 14 underfunded and understaffed, there's not enough help. 15 The same as I said, the time waiting sometimes can be up 16 to 10 to 12 hours waiting to see somebody when somebody 17 has a suicide attempt. I can relate to this myself 18 because, personally, I took a survivor last Christmas 19 who took 50 diazepam, and he was -- he took them at 20 7 o'clock at night. At 12 o'clock, we had still not 21 been seen and then, at 2 o'clock, they said they was 22 trying to get someone to us. Well, by then obviously 23 the tablets had kicked in and he was asleep and I said, 24 "Well, I don't think he is going to be able to talk to 25 anybody at the moment because of how he is", and they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 said, "Well, we will probably just send him home if he's 2 going to be all right". 3 That person now has been diagnosed that he needs 4 special trauma treatment. I have been through the 5 system with him and we are still waiting a year on. It 6 will be -- it's nearly a year in December, it will be, 7 sorry. We are still waiting for that treatment. This 8 is how poor the system is with these crises. 9 You have a crisis, really, you are on your own, and 10 if you haven't got no support and you live on your own, 11 then I think this is where lives are lost on a drastic 12 scale. 13 Q. Ms Coupland, can we then on the same page under the 14 heading "Availability of mental health support" on the 15 same page. You say, the bottom line: 16 "There is just not enough mental health support 17 available for survivors." 18 You describe it as being incredibly patchy. You say 19 that some GP surgeries -- two lines up from the bottom 20 there -- have refused to put leaflets in their surgery 21 about the Truth Project. Why is that? 22 A. I'm still not sure, but I have visited quite a few GP 23 surgeries to do my own research, and I have not found 24 hardly any leaflets in the Nottingham and 25 Nottinghamshire areas. I'm not sure if that's been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 updated now, but the ones I have seen have never been at 2 eye level neither. They have either been high up on 3 a wall where people can't always see what they're 4 looking for, it doesn't really stand out, and I think if 5 it's not promoted, then how do they know it's there as 6 well? 7 Q. May I pick you up on just one issue? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. Page 10, at the top of page 10, we have the second line 10 there, and something that I have just said, "some GP 11 surgeries have even refused to put leaflets in their 12 advice surgery". Is that something that you know 13 directly or that you have been told? 14 A. I was told that when I attended a conference out in the 15 Newark area, and it was a GP that was actually talking 16 to me, but I can't quote you who he actually was, but he 17 says, "I know some people are refusing to put leaflets 18 in their surgeries and it's like a bit of a stigma thing 19 with them". But actually, after we'd spoke in events, 20 NHS workshops that we were doing, Survivors Speaking 21 Out, quite a few came up to us and seemed to change 22 their mind, so I think it's important that that work 23 carries on. 24 Q. So it sounds like the need for understanding and 25 information sharing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>
<p>1 A. Yes, definitely. 2 Q. Paragraph 33, please, again on that page, page 10. 3 I know you don't have the page numbers on your document, 4 but do you have paragraph 33? 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. You say that when complainants have been in need of 7 urgent mental health intervention, those who work with 8 them call an ambulance, sometimes no-one comes. You say 9 in the last line of that paragraph: 10 "Quite often nobody answers the phone." 11 A. That's right. 12 Q. It may again be very obvious to you, Ms Coupland, but 13 what effect is this having on those that you work with? 14 A. It's costing lives. 15 Q. Do you have -- it seems a difficult issue to address, 16 I understand that, but to your direct experience, you 17 say it's costing lives. 18 A. Mmm. 19 Q. Has it cost the lives of those that you have been 20 working with in your group? 21 A. We have lost three survivors, not always -- two are not 22 in Nottingham. They were further afield. 23 Q. Should the inquiry understand that you have lost those 24 individuals as a result of harm that they have done to 25 themselves?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. Yes. 2 Q. Paragraph 28 of this statement, if we go back, please. 3 You set out there details of a meeting that you attended 4 with the mother of a complainant, A303, Mickey Summers 5 and Alison Michalska, corporate director of children and 6 families, to ask for further support for A303. You say 7 in paragraph 28 -- do you have that? 8 A. Yes. 9 Q. You say in paragraph 28 that your understanding was that 10 Ms Michalska was not in touch with A303's mother 11 following this meeting and that A303 later died. 12 A. Mmm-hmm. 13 Q. Since you wrote your first statement, an email has been 14 provided to the inquiry by Nottingham City Council, 15 which we see at NCC003801_001. It is at tab 7 in your 16 bundle. It's on the screen in front of you, if it's 17 more comfortable. 18 A. Okay. 19 Q. The email sent by Alison Michalska on 19 September 2014 20 reads: 21 "Further to our brief conversation in Loxley 22 reception yesterday lunchtime, my strong advice would be 23 for you to contact children and families direct ..." 24 The telephone number is given: 25 "... regarding the concern you have for your son who</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 was once a resident at Redtiles in Nottingham. Best 2 regards, Alison Michalska."</p> <p>3 You have drafted a supplementary statement to 4 address this, and at NCC003801_004, at paragraph 10 -- 5 do you have that, top of page 4, paragraph 10? It is 6 above "Recommendations". Do you have that?</p> <p>7 A. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. Where you discuss this email. You say: 9 "This email doesn't answer the concerns I raised. 10 It also does not address the overall point I have made 11 about the failure to provide proper support to 12 survivors."</p> <p>13 Bearing in mind the confidentiality that we all need 14 to exercise in relation to this particular case, what do 15 you mean by "the failure to provide proper support to 16 survivors", the overall point? What would you want the 17 inquiry to understand about that?</p> <p>18 A. When I went into this meeting with this lady about her 19 son, she asked for help because she was at her wits' end 20 and she didn't know what to do. She asked personally if 21 Alison Michalska would help her. In that meeting, she 22 agreed that she would help. I expected from 23 Alison Michalska to add more of a personal touch, not 24 a recommendation that she phone somebody. The lady was 25 obviously very distressed and I think Alison Michalska</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 could have done a lot better job than what she did. 2 To say she's a head of department, I think she could 3 have pulled more stops out to help this lady than just 4 give her a telephone number, even if she did send this 5 email. I was under the impression from her family that 6 there was no correspondence. That's what I was told. 7 I can only go by what I was told. But, as I say, for 8 a head of department, I think she could have done better 9 than just sending a phone number.</p> <p>10 Q. That's your view of her response? 11 A. Well, that's my view, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. You also say: 13 "The overall point I have made is about the failure 14 to provide proper support to survivors." 15 Should the inquiry understand that essentially 16 that's an example -- you would want that to be seen as 17 an example of not the proper support? Is that the point 18 you're trying to make? 19 A. Yes, that's right, it's not proper support.</p> <p>20 Q. In your supplementary statement, while we are still 21 there, if we go back a page, please, under the heading 22 "Mental health services" -- do you have that? It is 23 paragraph 6, if that helps you. Looking at your second 24 statement -- 25 A. Second statement, okay.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>
<p>1 Q. -- and paragraph 6. Do you have that now? 2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. You raise concerns that the situation may worsen in 4 relation to mental health. You refer to a media article 5 dated 11 October 2018 which reports that the 6 Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Greater 7 Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Groups plan to end the 8 service of ten mental health nurses who visit GP 9 surgeries across Nottingham and treat those who are not 10 unwell enough to need hospitalisation. 11 Does that mean -- should we understand that those in 12 your group have in the past accessed the service 13 provided by those ten mental health nurses? 14 A. We have had outreach service. I can't specifically say 15 it's from this specific service, but we have had 16 outreach service. After one of our survivors was 17 actually hospitalised, he carried on with outreach 18 services for a few weeks. Also, I have had another lady 19 as well who has accessed services similar to this. It 20 is where some survivors are not being kept in overnight 21 in units because there's not enough beds half the time, 22 so they're let out into the community and then kept an 23 eye on in the community.</p> <p>24 I don't mean to waffle on, but to say that we have 25 just had meetings with CCJs and the Crime Commissioner's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>	<p>1 Office, it is an absolute disgrace that they have cut 2 these jobs because we have been fighting, if anything, 3 for more of this outreach help by specialist services 4 and this is a total blow to survivors.</p> <p>5 Q. Can we go back, please, to your first statement, and to 6 paragraph 36 of that first statement. This is in 7 relation to the police and CPS investigations and 8 prosecutions. At paragraph 36 -- have you got there? 9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. You explain that the Police and Crime 11 Commissioner Paddy Tipping, who has just given evidence, 12 was, in your view, not very responsive at first, but 13 this has improved. He provides meeting rooms and has 14 employed somebody to act as a bridge between survivors 15 and authorities, and you say this has been useful. 16 You say, at paragraph 37, that a number of 17 complainants have told you that when they previously 18 reported their abuse to the police, they were not 19 believed, that they were ignored or they were just not 20 listened to. Has this improved? 21 A. I think the first part of the question is -- if I can go 22 by my own notes, if that's okay, when we first met 23 Paddy Tipping, I felt like he was giving us a lot of lip 24 service. I felt as though no-one was really listening 25 to us. Obviously, as things got more heated over</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 a period of time with campaigning and obviously there 2 was a lot of pressure on the police budgets then, 3 I think Paddy realised that we wasn't just going to go 4 away. So he did start to let us have rooms for group 5 meetings. I think he realised that it was more of 6 a serious issue than he first realised. 7 I feel as though Kevin Dennis has took a better role 8 with us, who works in Paddy Tipping's office, and I have 9 to give credit where credit's due, where we was 10 appointed a sexual violence manager, who was 11 Sharon Rose, who is like a mediator between ourselves 12 and councils and police. 13 These meetings that we did have that was provided by 14 the Crime Commissioner's Office, these meeting rooms, 15 also I'd like to thank John Mann as well because he 16 attended one of those meetings. 17 Q. Might I ask you a question? Is it all right if 18 I interrupt your flow? 19 A. Can I just ... 20 Q. You want to go on? 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Please do. 23 A. But I must say that we mustn't forget that people still 24 feel as though they're disbelieved and ignored by the 25 police, if that's okay for me to add that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 Q. In answer to my question as to whether or not the police 2 are any better, you would want to say it's been 3 qualified or they're not any better? 4 A. They have still got a long way to go, I think is the 5 answer. It's not foolproof, and I think there's not 6 enough men on the ground with all the cuts that's been 7 happening. 8 Q. Paragraph 38, please, Ms Coupland. You say the police 9 know now that they have got to take things more 10 seriously because of the national level of scrutiny. 11 You say some police officers have what you describe at 12 paragraph 39 as "a very blasé attitude". What do you 13 mean by that? 14 A. Well, some police officers are obviously not trained 15 correctly, so when they actually go out to see 16 a survivor, their approach is really unprofessional. 17 They haven't had specialised training in dealing with 18 survivors. Obviously, it's just serious crime. So 19 sometimes when they turn up -- and this is me speaking 20 on behalf of some survivors in my group, their own 21 personal experiences -- they have turned up at people's 22 houses and one of the first questions they'll ask people 23 is, "Do you have any children?". This automatically can 24 shut a survivor down, because they fear their children 25 being taken. So their approach is sometimes not the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 174</p>
<p>1 best. 2 Q. You say at -- 3 A. I also -- sorry -- recently, in a matter of weeks, one 4 survivor particularly specifically asked to be contacted 5 by the police by letter and that was actually put onto 6 the system. I was at her home when she specifically 7 asked for that. These two police officers, male -- 8 she'd asked for female -- had turned up at her house 9 actually with a letter, and she now refuses to even 10 disclose to any police officer because her wishes 11 weren't granted. 12 Q. Ms Coupland, how recent was that? 13 A. That was about two weeks ago. No, can I correct myself, 14 it might be three, actually. 15 Q. You say at -- are you all right that I go on? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. You say at paragraph 41 that you have made complaints to 18 the IOPC. What have those complaints been about? 19 A. Mainly them not taking complaints seriously of conduct, 20 really, and -- 21 Q. What has been the response to your complaints? 22 A. We feel as though they give us flimsy excuses, to be 23 honest. Because it was the IPCC where I was mainly 24 putting complaints in, even though it's changed over 25 now. I haven't done any recent ones. But we feel as</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 175</p>	<p>1 though they didn't really listen to us, didn't take us 2 seriously. 3 Q. Should the inquiry understand the fact that you haven't 4 done any recent ones means that there has been some 5 improvement? 6 A. I'm not sure, because I haven't done any recent ones. 7 Q. No. My question wasn't very well put. So you have made 8 complaints in the past? 9 A. Yes. 10 Q. You say that you haven't made complaints to the IOPC; is 11 that right? 12 A. No, I haven't. 13 Q. Should one understand that to reflect some improvement 14 in the way the police have been handling cases? 15 A. I don't know. I can't answer that. 16 Q. Paragraph 42, please. You say there that the current 17 Chief Commissioner of Police, Robert Griffin, does not, 18 as you describe it, "butter things up", and if the 19 police are unable to do something, he explains why, and 20 you say this style of communication is helpful to 21 complainants. Do you think this has had a positive 22 impact on complainant/police relations? 23 A. With some survivors, yes. I'm not saying that every 24 survivor has had the same experience, but the survivors 25 I have taken to him myself, I know that a few cases have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 176</p>

1 **been relooked at and other cases have been explained why**
 2 **they can't proceed, and he's also given advice on how to**
 3 **contact other forces and how to approach things, so he's**
 4 **also given us good advice. But obviously that's my**
 5 **experience with survivors I have took forward.**
 6 Q. Given what you said right at the beginning about the
 7 issues of trust, in your view, does the fact that the
 8 individual officers in the force gain the trust of
 9 complainants make a difference?
 10 **A. Definitely.**
 11 Q. Dealing, please, with paragraph 45, over the page, with
 12 the response of the CPS, the Crown Prosecution Service,
 13 you say at paragraph 45 that the CPS are "gatekeepers to
 14 survivors getting justice" and that you think they only
 15 "cherry pick the best cases". You say that they would
 16 rather the judge and jury decide their case. Have you
 17 had the opportunity or did you have the opportunity, for
 18 instance, to listen yesterday to CPS senior practitioner
 19 Sue Matthews?
 20 **A. Yes, I listened to some of it.**
 21 Q. Did that help you understand the process that the CPS go
 22 through in determining what cases to take forward?
 23 **A. I'm still not happy with that, to be honest. I still**
 24 **feel as though they cherry pick their cases. I also**
 25 **feel as though some cases are not given enough resources**

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1 Q. Is there any communication generally between the CPS and
 2 the survivors' group that you run?
 3 **A. Sorry, can you just rephrase that, sorry?**
 4 Q. No, that's fine. Is there open communication between
 5 the group that you support and the CPS?
 6 **A. No, not really.**
 7 Q. Do you think, if there was, it would assist complainants
 8 to understand the rationale behind the decisions that
 9 are taken? By "rationale", I mean the reasons for
 10 decisions being taken?
 11 **A. I don't know, really, because I think a lot of**
 12 **survivors' views are like mine, to be honest. it's just**
 13 **how we personally all feel, that we should be given our**
 14 **day in court.**
 15 Q. The CPS or police communicate no further action charging
 16 decisions directly to the complainant concerned. Do you
 17 think that that is the right way to notify individuals
 18 that their cases aren't being taken forward?
 19 **A. Can you just say that again, sorry?**
 20 Q. Yes. When the CPS make a decision, or the police make
 21 a decision, to take no further action in a particular
 22 case, that will be communicated, conveyed to, the
 23 individual about whose case that decision has been made
 24 directly. Do you think there are other ways that
 25 communication could be achieved in telling someone that

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1 **to progress them as well, as in -- but, really -- let me**
 2 **just rephrase that. I have had some survivors that**
 3 **would like to do ID parades and things like that and not**
 4 **been able to, and we have gone into CPS meetings and we**
 5 **have asked why, you know, the case can't be handled --**
 6 **if we handle the case different, is there another chance**
 7 **we can re-open things, and that's not happened.**
 8 **I really feel as though -- my personal opinion is**
 9 **that the British justice system no longer works for the**
 10 **underdog, and we have to accept that somebody else can**
 11 **play judge and jury for us, and sometimes it would be**
 12 **nice just for some cases to try and go to court and let**
 13 **a jury decide.**
 14 **I think a lot of it is about money, and that's my**
 15 **personal feeling.**
 16 Q. You say, Ms Coupland -- I picked up in your answer that
 17 you have had meetings with the CPS?
 18 **A. Yes. We have had meetings in CPS where we have tried to**
 19 **get cases relooked at.**
 20 Q. So those meetings were at your request?
 21 **A. Not my personal request. I have been asked to attend**
 22 **that meeting with survivors.**
 23 Q. These were meetings that were reviewing decisions?
 24 **A. Yes, or why they have come to that decision of that**
 25 **case.**

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1 their case isn't going to go further?
 2 **A. Yes, I think -- I think people need to be sat down and**
 3 **explained thoroughly why, and then obviously they can**
 4 **put their points across of why they feel it should.**
 5 **I feel a lot of survivors have never had this**
 6 **opportunity to really understand the CPS's decision, and**
 7 **just receiving it in a letter is very informal, it**
 8 **doesn't give them a full understanding, and you also**
 9 **have to remember that a lot of survivors can't read and**
 10 **write, so they might be able to understand it better if**
 11 **they're told face to face.**
 12 Q. Moving on, if I may, you discuss at paragraph 46 the
 13 issue of access to records. In your experience, you
 14 say, complainants have had difficulty in accessing
 15 records. You say there's been a terrible slowness on
 16 the part of both councils. You provide as an example of
 17 this problem the difficulties and frustrations that
 18 Mickey Summers has had in trying to obtain his records.
 19 You say at paragraph 47 that most survivors "want to see
 20 their records and see what happened to them as a child".
 21 What's the impact on those you support of being unable
 22 to access records?
 23 **A. People like ourselves, we know our history, we know**
 24 **where we came from, we have our photo albums, we have**
 25 **our history, our parents tell us. These people have**

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<p>1 nothing. Some of them were in children's homes, didn't 2 have families, they were totally there alone. Their 3 history is those records and they're being held back 4 from them. And I would like to add on to this that the 5 access of the records is a total shambles in Nottingham 6 and, when they do get their files to say how long they 7 have been in care, the files are very sparse of 8 information, which I find unacceptable because you can't 9 go through years of being in care and you've got a file 10 that's a few pages long.</p> <p>11 Q. Ms Coupland, are you able to give the inquiry an 12 indication or an estimate of what number or proportion 13 of the group that you represent have been unable to 14 access their records, either completely or have only 15 been given a few of those records?</p> <p>16 A. All my group have only been given a few records -- no, 17 let me get this right. Most of my group haven't got 18 their records. A few have got a few pages and some of 19 that information is redacted or you can't even read it. 20 So it's not worth the paper it's written on because you 21 can't even read it half the time anyway.</p> <p>22 Q. You say that in your view the files do exist and that 23 you "think there are storage facilities around 24 Nottingham", you think files have been moved 25 deliberately around and that insurance companies are</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 putting pressure on the councils not to disclose. 2 To help the inquiry, do you have any direct 3 evidence, yourself, of that being the case?</p> <p>4 A. I had a lady come to me who was working as a cleaner, 5 and she said there is a storage facility in Nottingham 6 where there is files. She said it is guarded and 7 camera-ed. I can't go too much into that now because 8 the lady in question is very ill, but --</p> <p>9 Q. Are you able to say where the storage facility is?</p> <p>10 A. It was somewhere in the Colwick area of Nottingham.</p> <p>11 Q. It's on that, that you base the assertions you put?</p> <p>12 A. Yes. Yes. Also, my brother worked at -- the storage of 13 files is absolutely diabolical, because my brother 14 worked at the old children's hospital in Nottingham. 15 There was even files left in caves there. My brother 16 actually saw all those as well. Those files might be 17 medical, they might not be to do with the councils, 18 though, so I'm not going to exasperate on that. So it 19 seems as though in Nottingham everybody's data seems to 20 be unorganised and -- even in the hospitals, not just in 21 the councils, but anything -- I mean, we are talking 22 data protection here and laws are being broken.</p> <p>23 We know this is happening, and we know also -- 24 I know this isn't just my view, this is survivors' 25 views, that they personally feel that insurance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>
<p>1 companies are advising councils and legal teams because 2 of admitting liability, and some of these records will 3 prove their cases, and this is another reason why we 4 feel as though these files are not being found.</p> <p>5 What we need in Nottingham is a team of archivists, 6 who are independent, to get all these files in order and 7 start sifting through them. They have got to be 8 somewhere. They can't all vanish. There is -- the same 9 as I said, there is laws that state that this 10 information has to be looked after.</p> <p>11 I would like to say on another note on here as well 12 that some files we were told that were shut down by what 13 we call a D-notice. I'm not 100 per cent sure what 14 a D-notice is, but I know files can be shut down, and 15 that was another reason why people couldn't access 16 information that had had issues.</p> <p>17 Q. Paragraph 50, please. In respect of the council's 18 response, you believe there's been a major difference 19 between the response of the city council and the 20 county council. At paragraph 50, you express generally 21 positive views on the progress and attitude of 22 the county council. You say, in your view, they are 23 "more open", "a little better at allowing survivors 24 access to records". You go on: 25 "The fact that they have made two public apologies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>	<p>1 and put themselves out more has made a massive 2 difference to survivors."</p> <p>3 What weight do you place on the public apologies 4 made?</p> <p>5 A. Well, let me just speak on that for a moment. I'll just 6 get my thoughts together on this. I want to say for the 7 record that some don't forgive. But they do feel the 8 apology was a lot better than our city council's, as 9 that was a real poor effort, what they did.</p> <p>10 I don't think any survivor is ever going to forgive 11 what's happened to them, but what we do is, we felt as 12 though the county apology was more heartfelt because 13 they did it in a different way, where they actually 14 called us into the public gallery, apologised to us in 15 a public meeting and then they invited the media to come 16 along, and obviously survivors spoke to the media in 17 there, and they did -- and we felt it was -- it was done 18 in a way that it should have been.</p> <p>19 I'm not saying that some survivors wouldn't have 20 liked to be called in and have a personal apology as 21 well, because I still feel as though that could still 22 happen, that some need to be individually apologised in 23 person.</p> <p>24 As with the city council, it was an absolute 25 shambles. It was stuck on a website. Nobody knew it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

<p>1 was even there. It was only by chance that somebody 2 spotted it. Then there was an article done later in 3 The Post. 4 We felt it was fickle, it had no substance to it, 5 and survivors were bitterly disappointed that it wasn't 6 made public and done in the same way that the county had 7 done theirs. 8 Q. At paragraph 51, you highlight the work of individuals 9 within the city, Helen Jones and Julie Gardner in 10 particular? 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. But, as you have just described now, in your view, the 13 response of the city council could not be more different 14 to that of the county. You say that they are "cold". 15 They "pay lip service to complainants and there's been 16 no apology". Of course we have learnt since that there 17 has been an apology -- 18 A. That's right. 19 Q. -- and you have given your description about that. 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. Do you think the city council has gained the trust of 22 complainants? 23 A. No. 24 Q. How do you think that could be achieved? 25 A. To be honest, I really don't know anymore, because they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 185</p>	<p>1 have done that much to survivors that the barriers of 2 trust are all up. 3 One thing about the city council is, their heads of 4 council are totally ignorant. They put little snippets 5 out in their papers for us to read. They're just so 6 arrogant. I really don't see how we can ever forgive 7 our city council for the way that they have treated not 8 just my group, but many other groups. 9 I can't really answer that question any more than 10 that, but I know how my group feel and, to be honest, 11 until there's vast change at the top in our council in 12 Nottingham, I can't see there being any change in there. 13 Q. May I ask you one final question, please. Paragraph 9 14 of your supplementary statement. You say that you are 15 "concerned that once IICSA ends, the police and the 16 councils are going to sit back in their chairs, breathe 17 a sigh of relief and think that nobody is looking 18 anymore". How do you think the inquiry and the 19 authorities can guard against this potential problem, as 20 you see it? 21 A. There needs to be some resignations in Nottingham. 22 MR SADD: Ms Coupland, thank you for much for your patience 23 with me. The panel may have questions. 24 THE CHAIR: No, we have no questions. Thank you very much, 25 Ms Coupland.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 186</p>
<p>1 MR SADD: Chair, there is one correction that I need to 2 make. The statement dated 3 October 2018 should in fact 3 have been dated 3 September 2018, I'm told. 4 I referred also, chair, to an email at NCC003801, 5 and said that it would be brought up on the screen. 6 I understood in fact that we were unable to do so, and 7 I apologise for that. I hadn't followed that properly. 8 The document will be published on the inquiry website. 9 Chair, I know that it is now 4.15 pm. It may be 10 that at this stage Ms Coupland can be allowed to stand 11 down, but there is 15 minutes of me reading in 12 a statement. 13 (The witness withdrew) 14 Statement of MS MAXINE LEIGH (read) 15 MR SADD: Chair, this is the witness statement of 16 Maxine Leigh, formerly known as Maxine Robinson. It is 17 a statement dated 17 September 2018, and it reads as 18 follows: 19 "I, Maxine Leigh, will say as follows: 20 "I am the founder of the charity Support for 21 Survivors (SfS) and I make this statement to provide the 22 inquiry with information about the work I undertake with 23 victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and what 24 I understand to be the general views of victims and 25 survivors in relation to institutional responses to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 187</p>	<p>1 abuse. 2 "Support for survivors. 3 "I am a survivor of child sexual abuse. I first 4 became involved in a support group called Survivors 5 Helping Each Other (SHE) in November 2009. SHE helped 6 me a lot and so I became a volunteer and then in 2011 7 I became the chair of the organisation. I developed the 8 organisation through networking and bringing in other 9 agencies. 10 "I stepped down as the chair of SHE in 2013 and 11 I went on to set up a self-help group in Nottingham. 12 The self-help group soon became a support group and then 13 SfS was born in 2015. 14 "I believed there was a lack of support available 15 for victims and survivors in Nottingham. I therefore 16 created a model at SfS which fits every single victim 17 and survivor that walks through our door. SfS is unique 18 as our volunteers are also survivors. There are 19 currently six volunteers working with SfS. I have 20 attached ... a document which sets out our mission 21 statement and our aims and objectives. 22 "SfS has grown over the years and we now support 23 around 200 victims and survivors of abuse. I have used 24 my own experiences to help other survivors and have won 25 a number of awards for my work including the Sheriff of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 188</p>

<p>1 Nottingham Award 2014, the Black Achievers Health Award 2 (University of Nottingham) 2016, and awards in the 3 Michael Varnam Awards 2016 and Inspire National Awards 4 2016. I recently won the Nottingham Post Inspirational 5 Women in Business Award and an award for my volunteer 6 work with Nottingham Community Volunteer Services at the 7 Best in Community 2017 Awards. I also offer both 8 national and local training. I am a public governor of 9 the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, and 10 appointee of the National Catholic Safeguarding 11 Commission and a member of the Survivors Advisory Panel. 12 "I believe my experience has given me an 13 understanding of the needs of victims and survivors. 14 I have set out below information about my own 15 experiences and the experiences of other victims and 16 survivors when dealing with institutions and other 17 bodies. 18 "View on institutions. 19 "Nottinghamshire Councils. 20 "Not a single victim/survivor that I have come 21 across in my role at SFS has had one positive word to 22 say about their experiences with the Nottinghamshire 23 Councils. I am going to refer to Nottingham City 24 Council and Nottingham County Council collectively as 25 'the Nottingham Councils' because I don't think there is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 189</p>	<p>1 any difference between them. They are both guilty of 2 failing victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and 3 they continue to let people down. 4 "I have voiced on many occasions the concerns 5 victims and survivors have regarding the destruction of 6 their social care records and the responses they get 7 from the councils when requesting these records. 8 "The victims and survivors that I support are of 9 the view that their records have been deliberately 10 destroyed. When a person requests their records and 11 they are later told that their records are not 12 available, it causes complete distress and I cannot 13 stress enough how important it is for Social Services to 14 retain records. Our records contain our life stories 15 and they are so important to help us put the pieces 16 together of our broken lives. If records have been 17 destroyed, then someone from the council should sit down 18 and explain what happened to the victim/survivor. I am 19 aware of individuals who have just been sent a letter to 20 say their records have been destroyed or are just 21 provided with one sheet of paper without any proper 22 explanation as to where the rest of the files are. 23 I would certainly hope to see a better system for 24 retaining records in the future to prevent this 25 happening to other people.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 190</p>
<p>1 "Many of the victims and survivors I represent fear 2 the councils are attempting to cover up their failures. 3 The fact that the councils have destroyed so many files 4 reinforces this view amongst victims and survivors. 5 "Many female victims and survivors I work with have 6 more Social Services involvement with their own families 7 because, as mothers, they tend to lack parenting skills 8 because they were never taught this by their own 9 mothers. It is a very sad cycle, but I see it 10 happening, day in, day out. The mothers cannot work 11 with Social Services because they have no trust in them; 12 they see them as the body that let them down in their 13 childhood. They fear that their children are going to 14 be taken away from them and placed into the care system 15 and given their own experience. This causes greater 16 fear, frustration and anger, leading to a very hostile 17 relationship between the mother and the social worker. 18 I often see children being taken away from their mothers 19 when situations like this arise. I think the mothers 20 need to be supported with educational programmes which 21 may prevent the child being taken away. We need to 22 break this cycle. 23 "Nottinghamshire Police. 24 "There has been lots of concern expressed about the 25 way the police have dealt with victims and survivors</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 191</p>	<p>1 when they are disclosing their abuse. Victims and 2 survivors feel they are not being supported by the 3 police. Some feel very alone throughout this process. 4 Many are isolated from family members, making the impact 5 enormous. Many survivors have raised the following 6 issues in relation to Nottinghamshire Police: 7 "Lack of sensitivity and empathy; 8 "No regard for privacy or confidentiality - I am 9 aware of conversations taking place in front of children 10 or over the phone without regard to where the victim or 11 survivor is; 12 "Unannounced visits, especially late at night; 13 "Male officers visiting alone, which causes anxiety 14 and aggravates existing trust issues; 15 "Uniformed officers visiting at home, attracting 16 unwanted local attention, and sometimes causing 17 embarrassment; 18 "The use of text messages to update victims of 'no 19 further action' decisions. There is no consideration as 20 to where the person might be when they receive that text 21 and there is no opportunity for the victim/survivor to 22 discuss the decision further to help them to understand 23 the reasoning. 24 "On 29 August 2018, I attended a meeting with 25 Nottinghamshire Police to express these concerns and put</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 192</p>

<p>1 forward recommendations on behalf of Sfs. I felt I was 2 listened to at this meeting, but time will tell. I had 3 been trying to get the meeting set up for a very long 4 time. I think the police might have finally agreed to 5 the meeting in August because of the imminence of 6 the inquiry hearings and the fact that their failures 7 would be addressed in public. I think they were trying 8 to save face. I'm not convinced this meeting would have 9 happened had it not been for the inquiry. At the 10 meeting I made the following recommendations to the 11 police: 12 "Meetings with victims/survivors to be arranged in 13 advance, rather than unannounced visits; 14 "Victims/survivors should be given a choice as to 15 whether they would like to deal with a male or female 16 officer; 17 "Victims/survivors should be given the opportunity 18 to come to the police station rather than meeting the 19 police at home; 20 "Police officers should recognise the enormity of 21 the decision to disclose and the impact on 22 victims/survivors; 23 "Police officers should recognise that police 24 intervention might trigger support needs. Consideration 25 needs to be given to the accessibility of support for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 193</p>	<p>1 victims/survivors before or after interviews, especially 2 when these take place out of hours. 3 "To me, these are all commonsense things that should 4 have been addressed already. 5 "My solicitors have provided me with the statement 6 of Detective Superintendent Rob Griffin and I note at 7 paragraph 121 he states: 8 ""The detective inspector in charge of the SEIU in 9 Nottinghamshire developed an e-learning programme 10 specifically relating to CSE. This followed 11 high-profile cases in Rochdale, Oxford and Rotherham, 12 which highlighted a lack of knowledge and understanding 13 of CSE by front-line officers. Completion of 14 the programme is mandatory for all police officers and 15 police staff up to and including the rank of chief 16 inspector, and for all staff who work in the force 17 control room'. 18 "Whilst I think it is good that officers are 19 provided with training, I do not think this training 20 helps them to deal with cases of non-recent child sexual 21 abuse. I still think the police are lacking in training 22 on how to sensitively deal with people who have buried 23 their abuse for many years. Sfs is able to offer this 24 training to the police. I discussed this with 25 Chief Constable Sue Fish many years ago before she stood</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 194</p>
<p>1 down. She invited me to a meeting at the police 2 headquarters to discuss this. She said she was going to 3 ensure the training was rolled out; she promised me the 4 world but it never materialised and I never heard 5 anything further. 6 "I have been disgusted by some of the stories I have 7 heard from victims and survivors about the distress the 8 police have caused to them. This should not be 9 happening. Victims and survivors have difficulties in 10 trusting people in authority so when they make that 11 disclosure to the police, they expect they will be 12 treated with respect and believed. I am afraid to say 13 this isn't always the case. 14 "NHS. 15 "I think that NHS staff should have mandatory 16 training to help them identify victims and survivors at 17 the earliest possible opportunity. The burden on mental 18 health and well-being services is astronomical and 19 I believe this could be reduced with early intervention. 20 I think if, for example, A&E services and GPs had 21 training in this area they might be able to identify 22 victims and survivors when they first come into the 23 service and then refer them on to an early intervention 24 service. I think this would really help. 25 "General recommendations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 195</p>	<p>1 "Victims and survivors in Nottingham have shown 2 great strength and determination in coming forward and 3 disclosing their abuse in the hope that positive changes 4 will be made for children in care. I believe this 5 should be recognised by a monument being erected in 6 Nottingham City centre. 7 "Multi-agency meetings. 8 "I attended the councils' Survivors' Support 9 Meetings in Nottingham, which take place every three 10 months at County Hall. Attendees include 11 representatives from both Nottinghamshire Councils, the 12 NHS, Nottinghamshire Police, Safeguarding, social 13 workers and Nottingham Child Sexual Abuse Survivors 14 Group. At these meetings, we discuss areas of concern, 15 what's working well, and updates on new initiatives in 16 place to help victims and survivors. 17 "When these meetings first started, I felt it was 18 not a positive environment. The pain and passion of 19 the victims and survivors who were in attendance 20 resulted in it feeling like an angry and hostile 21 environment. As time has passed, there has been some 22 positive work being produced. I must make it quite 23 clear: this would not have happened if it wasn't for 24 Nottingham Child Sexual Abuse Survivors Group, who have 25 done fantastic work.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 196</p>

<p>1 "The multi-agency group has worked together to 2 produce a leaflet, which I have attached at ML2. These 3 leaflets are distributed to places such as probation, 4 doctors' surgeries, libraries, hospitals and the DWP. 5 I have voiced my concerns that these leaflets are not 6 fit for purpose. Inside the leaflet lists NHS local 7 Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services. 8 This is good for well-being and counselling for stress, 9 emotional well-being, et cetera, but it does not help to 10 support people who have experienced non-recent abuse. 11 I am aware of victims and survivors calling the number 12 and going through a telephone interview, only to be told 13 they do not fit the criteria. The person is then often 14 left in crisis. 15 "The leaflet only advertises quality assured 16 services and provides details of national helplines, but 17 what use is a national helpline when the person requires 18 a service in the city or county? Sfs and other support 19 services are within our communities and should be 20 checked out to make sure that they adhere to certain 21 criteria and then included in the leaflet. I think it 22 is so important that victims and survivors are able to 23 access local support. 24 "Despite my concerns, I have seen changes since 25 these meetings started. I am aware that there have been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 197</p>	<p>1 changes to how children's homes are running, and this is 2 because we are being listened to in the group. It is 3 also very useful for us to have these meetings because 4 we are given information about Operation Equinox and 5 Operation Hydrant; this allows us to feed this 6 information back to victims and survivors and this is 7 important. 8 "There is still a lot of work to be done but I do 9 feel as though things are changing for the better. My 10 motto is: 'Today and together, let's all build a better 11 future for our children and survivors of non-recent 12 abuse'. I hope that the institutions will try to do the 13 same." 14 End of statement, chair. 15 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Sadd. That, I believe, concludes 16 today's hearing. 17 MR SADD: Thank you, chair. 18 THE CHAIR: Thank you. 19 (4.30 pm) 20 (The hearing was adjourned to 21 Thursday, 25 October 2018 at 10.00 am) 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 198</p>
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