

Witness Name: Deana Neilson  
Statement No.: Nottinghamshire 2  
Exhibits: 1  
Dated: 07 September 2018

## THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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### Supplementary Witness Statement of Deanna Neilson Nottinghamshire Council Case Study

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I, Deanna Neilson, of 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford, WD18 8AG, will say as follows:

1. Further to my previous statement submitted to the Inquiry on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018, a supplementary statement was requested and is provided below. I make this statement in connection with a case study concerning alleged sexual abuse carried out by children against other children in the care of the Nottinghamshire Councils. For ease of reference, I have identified the issues requested to be covered by IICSA under separate headings and highlighted in bold formatting below.
2. The facts and matters set out in this witness statement are within my own knowledge unless otherwise stated, and I believe them to be true. Where I refer to information supplied by others, the source of the information is identified; facts and matters derived from other sources are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. Attached to this witness statement is an exhibit known as DN2 / 1, to which I will make reference. That exhibit is an 'Evaluation Summary Report of Number 28 Child and Family Counselling Service Centre for Social Action, De Montford University April 1996'. It should be noted that this report was prepared by a former NCH staff member, John Burn, who managed the Nottinghamshire Unit (hereafter referred to as 'the Unit') in the early years of its operation.
- A. In relation to paragraph 3.11 of your statement, you say that the Nottinghamshire Unit was operating from 01.04.1992 and that the end date was 30.04.2012:
  - a. If possible, please could you provide further information about the work of the Nottinghamshire Unit during its 20 years of operation? In particular:
    - (i) The numbers of Children and Young People treated during its existence;
3. Action for Children maintained an electronic database of service information which sought to count the numbers of children and young people seen in the Unit on a quarterly basis. The data available would suggest that the unit worked with around 90

children per year, although the quarterly data was not entered for every quarter that the unit was in operation, as the electronic system commenced after the unit did.

**(ii) The methods of referral to the Unit for treatment;**

4. Former staff recall that most children and young people were referred to the unit by Social Services. This is mentioned in the evaluation summary report (Exhibit DN2) on page 4; *'most people found out about No.28 through referral by Social Services.'*
5. John Burn recalled that referrals could come from professionals, however the majority came from social services. In the evaluation report there is a quote from a referrer who states, *'people can self-refer to Number 28, which is important'* (Exhibit DN2 page 15).

**(iii) The methods of treatment employed;**

6. The Evaluation of No. 28 summary report describes the methods of treatment employed: *'Number 28 offers a variety of therapeutic services to children and young people who have suffered sexual abuse and their families. The project workers come from a variety of backgrounds and experience including social work, nursing and youth and community work. They are able to offer a variety of approaches to children including play therapy, art therapy and person-centred counselling' The project offers individual and group work'* (Exhibit DN2 page 2)

**(iv) The outcome of treatment provided; and**

7. In the Evaluation Summary report, a section summarises if anything had changed because of the sessions at Number 28; *'A very few children, young people or carers could identify no changes for them because of going to No.28. Many children and young people identified a whole range of positive changes for themselves that they attributed to going to Number 28.'* (Exhibit DN2 page 11)
8. Anonymised quotations from children in the Evaluation Summary report identified outcomes of treatment provided including the cessation of nightmares and fear, increased ability to express emotion, increase in self-confidence and improved relationships. Carers and referrers also attributed those positive changes identified by the young people themselves in the children and young people.
9. Carers and referrers also attributed positive changes in the carer's situations to attending No. 28, including increased bonding with their children. (Exhibit DN2 page 12)

**(v) Whether victims and abusers were treated together in the Unit.**

10. I am unable to state definitively whether victims and abusers were treated together in the Unit based on the information available. I can confirm that specific treatment of this nature is not mentioned in in Evaluation Summary Report (Exhibit DN2).

**b. Please could you provide more information about the closure of the Nottinghamshire Unit:**

**(i) The decision maker who authorised the closure;**

**11.** Jane Williams, former Assistant Director of Children's Services for NCH, covering the Nottinghamshire council, recalled that Management Committee meetings in relation to No.28 were held quarterly in line with standard NCH practice for management of services at the time (Exhibit DN2 page XX). At these meetings, the project manager presented reports that detailed volume of work, referrals and their source, service provided and length of treatment, outcomes and some evaluation. Future needs of the local population and funding were discussed at the meetings. These were attended by the Assistant Director Children's Services NCH, the project manager, and the equivalent senior service manager level from the Local Authorities. Jane Williams recalled that the plans for closure would have been discussed at those meetings, however could not recall the detail (Exhibit DN2 page XX). I am unable to locate any other records within Action for Children's control relating to that Management Committee.

**(ii) The reason for deciding to close the Unit;**

**12.** Please see response to question numbered A b (i).

**And**

**(iii) Whether any alternative provision was made for the treatment of young sexual abusers in Nottinghamshire.**

**13.** I am unable to answer this question definitively based on the information available to me. I can confirm that the records within Action for Children's control do not detail other treatment of young sexual abusers in Nottinghamshire.

**c. In relation to paragraph 3.12 of your statement, you say that there was no specific reference to the Unit offering a service specifically for children abused in foster or residential care. If possible, please indicate the number of children referred from local authority run residential homes and foster care.**

**14.** The records within Action for Children's control do not state the source of all referrals to the Unit and therefore I am not able to indicate the number of children referred from local authority run residential homes and foster care.

**d. Please provide any documents that you think are relevant to the questions above.**

**15.** Please refer to the Exhibit DN2 / 1 annexed to this statement.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: **DPA**

Dated: 07/09/2018

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**EXHIBIT DN2**

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