

OPENING STATEMENT

Introduction

1. On Thursday 12 March 2015 the Home Secretary established a statutory inquiry under the 2005 Inquiries Act with the aim of conducting an overarching national review of the extent to which institutions in England and Wales have discharged their duty of care to protect children against sexual abuse. I accepted the Home Secretary's invitation to chair the Inquiry and took up my position on Monday 13 April 2015. Following a statutory consultation process, the Home Secretary set the terms of reference for the Inquiry and announced the appointment of the four members of the Inquiry Panel: Professor Malcolm Evans, Ivor Frank, Professor Alexis Jay and Dru Sharpling. They each have long experience and considerable distinction in their respective fields of expertise, and each has a distinct professional contribution to make to the work of this Inquiry.

2. The task ahead of us is daunting. The sexual abuse of children over successive generations has left permanent scars, not only on the victims themselves, but on society as a whole. This Inquiry provides a unique opportunity to expose past failures of institutions to protect children, to confront those responsible, to uncover systemic failures, to provide support to victims and survivors in sharing their experiences, and to make recommendations that will help prevent the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the future. An Inquiry on this scale requires a focused approach, with defined objectives from the outset, and a working structure that is clear and practical. It also requires complete objectivity. That implies a commitment to hear all sides with an open mind, without any pre-judgment about the issues, and under conditions which provide a fair opportunity for all of those affected by the Inquiry to share their experiences and put their points across.

3. The Panel has adopted three guiding principles that will shape the Inquiry's work – it must be comprehensive; it must be inclusive; and it must be thorough. These guiding principles call for a combination of approaches. We have therefore

devised ways of working that will enable the Inquiry to determine patterns of abuse and institutional failure; that will enable every victim or survivor of abuse occurring in an institutional setting, or with an institutional dimension, to bear witness to their experience; and that will drill down into the operation of selected institutional sectors where children have been abused, critically investigating their child protection processes at formal inquiry hearings, and seeking to learn wider lessons for the future.

4. When I accepted my appointment, I said that I was committed to ensuring the Inquiry's work would be conducted as transparently as possible, and that I would make public statements at regular intervals so that it does not become remote from the public it exists to serve. The principle of transparency is reflected in the terms of reference for the Inquiry and I intend to ensure that this is faithfully implemented. Some aspects of the Inquiry's work are of course confidential for good reason. However, I am determined to put as much information into the public domain as I properly can, as soon as I can.

5. The Inquiry Panel and staff have been working hard to put the necessary foundations in place. Much of the groundwork has obviously had to happen behind the scenes, and I am conscious that many of those with an interest in the work of the Inquiry are impatient to hear about what we have been doing and to know how the Inquiry intends to go about its work. After two false starts it was critical to get the basics right, before the Inquiry was opened to the public and able to begin its practical operations.

6. After nearly four months of intense and essential preparatory work, I am pleased to be able to announce that the Inquiry is now ready to begin the first phase of its work. There are a small number of steps that still need to be taken to consolidate the Inquiry's infrastructure, and there are one or two key appointments still to be made. I am pleased to say, however, that the essential elements are now in place. This statement sets out the key principles that will guide the Inquiry in the challenging task ahead, and explains the structure and working methods the Inquiry Panel has decided to adopt. It summarises the steps that have so far been taken to build the necessary architecture for the Inquiry's work, and explains the various ways in which victims and survivors will be able to engage with the Inquiry as it proceeds.

Context

7. Before I turn to describe how the Inquiry will conduct its work, I want to say a word or two about the context. In this country, as in other jurisdictions, public concern about institutional failure to protect children from sexual abuse has mounted with the growing realisation of the sheer scale of this problem. The available data does not give a complete picture of the levels of child sexual abuse in England and Wales. The need for accurate recording is one of the issues that the Inquiry will have to confront. Estimates suggest that one child in every twenty in the United Kingdom has been sexually abused. The most recent published statistics for 2014 show that the police in England and Wales recorded over 28,000 sexual offences in which the victim was under the age of 16. The police caseload for reports of child sexual abuse has risen sharply over the past two years. By the end of 2015 it is projected to have shown an increase of 71% over the preceding three years. There has been a corresponding rise in reports to social services departments, and the same pattern is reported by voluntary organisations. To take just one example, there has been an increase of 124% over the last year in the number of sexual abuse referrals from ChildLine. In addition to these documented cases, we know that many more children who are sexually abused by an adult do not tell anyone what was done to them. Even when they do, their reports may go unheeded. There are indications of systemic under-recording and misrecording in statistics compiled by the police and other agencies. All of this suggests that the true picture may be even worse than the current figures indicate.

8. One member of the Inquiry Panel, Professor Alexis Jay, reported on the sexual exploitation of children in Rotherham over 16 years on a scale which has stunned the British public. This has led to a major increase in awareness of the issue and how it should be tackled, and has resulted in child sexual abuse and exploitation becoming a national policing priority. Another member of the Panel, Dru Sharpling, has examined policing responses to child abuse in her capacity as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary. As recently as last week, she published a series of reports assessing how well the police were keeping children safe and investigating cases of abuse. In one of her reports she recorded that 38% of the sample police case files on child abuse examined by HMIC were judged to be inadequate.

9. A significant number of children, and of adults who were sexually abused in childhood, report abuse in an institutional setting of one kind or another, and many more report being let down by the neglect of institutions that were there to protect them. It is a stark reality that some abusers have abused their positions of trust within institutions as a means of gaining unfettered access to children. That access appears to be the very thing that motivates many abusers to work in such institutions in the first place, and the evidence shows us that in every country and over time offenders have exploited poor institutional communication, poor institutional supervision, poor recruitment and vetting of staff, and poor institutional child protection systems, to provide them with the opportunity to commit crimes against children.

10. As in Australia, Northern Ireland, Jersey and now Scotland, the level of public concern has resulted in calls for an overarching inquiry – an inquiry with the breadth, powers and resources to look at the whole picture, to learn the lessons of the past, to take stock of child protection procedures that are currently in operation, and to set a new and safer course for the future. The challenge for this Inquiry is to ensure that children are given the care and protection they need and deserve. Examining the past is an important part of our work. But the Inquiry must be more than just an exercise in historical recording. It must also provide an enduring legacy for future generations. We will aim to make solid and practical recommendations for meaningful change, and we will suggest ways of checking that our recommendations are implemented.

Time and Scale

11. Many victims and survivors have already waited far too long for recognition of the abuse they have suffered. Too many individuals and institutions have been sheltered from accountability through patterns of indifference or obstruction. We see it as our solemn duty to report our findings as soon as possible. The Inquiry Panel has no wish to see this Inquiry continue for any longer than is strictly necessary. At the same time it would be wrong to underestimate the scale of the task. The unprecedented breadth of the Inquiry's mandate represents a major operational challenge and its work will inevitably take time to complete.

12. The terms of reference include all state and non-state institutions, not solely those with direct child protection responsibilities. It has no cut-off date, and may require inquiries to be made about events occurring many years or even decades

ago. We must travel from the corridors of power in Westminster to children's homes in the poorest parts of the country, to hospitals, GP surgeries, schools, churches and charities. We must investigate local authorities, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, the NHS, the media and the armed forces. We must also look into the roles of charities and voluntary organisations and we may have to challenge powerful private interests such as internet service providers (to see whether they could be doing more to prevent the distribution of online child abuse imagery), and insurance companies (which are accused of obstructing admissions of liability in child abuse claims, and thereby defeating the right to truth for victims and survivors). We must put difficult questions to politicians, bishops and other faith leaders, headteachers, police officers, regulators, inspectors, and public officials of all kinds. And we will carry on putting those questions until we get the answers. No one, no matter how apparently powerful, will be allowed to obstruct our enquiries into institutional failings, and no one will have immunity from scrutiny by virtue of their position. We have the tools we need to get at the truth and we will not hesitate to use them.

13. The Inquiry Panel is committed to fulfilling its terms of reference within a credible timescale. In order to do that the Panel has divided the Inquiry's mandate into sectoral workstreams which will proceed concurrently, with each workstream supported by a dedicated team, including lawyers, researchers and Secretariat staff, using consistent working methods. For each institutional area falling within the terms of reference there will be a substantial research component examining the overall performance of institutions over time. This will be coupled with a public investigation of selected institutions and the extent to which they have discharged their child protection responsibilities. The various components of the Inquiry will work simultaneously to discharge the Inquiry's mandate as expeditiously as possible. The workstreams will be carried out in a systematic and co-ordinated manner under the collective leadership of the Inquiry Panel. This of course demands a committed effort and the provision of adequate human and material resources, and I have personally scrutinised the requirement for legal, administrative and research personnel. I have identified the number of operational staff that is, in my judgment, strictly necessary to complete the work within a timescale that is reasonable and proportionate.

14. A great deal of effort in the early weeks has of course been spent on building the infrastructure necessary for this substantial undertaking.

- The Inquiry Panel has carefully considered and approved the architecture of the Inquiry and the Panel members have each begun a scoping exercise of the work they will be doing, with the assistance of counsel.
- The Secretariat has recruited the core administrative and support staff and has managed all of the essential preparatory work over the past three months. Members of the Inquiry's senior management team have liaised closely with their counterparts at the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. I would like to record my thanks to the staff and officers of the Royal Commission for sharing with us the benefit of their experience and advice.
- We have conducted a recruitment process for the appointment of members of the Victims and Survivors' Consultative Panel, which is expected to begin its work very soon. I will say a little more about that shortly.
- Counsel to the Inquiry, Ben Emmerson QC, has conducted a recruitment exercise for the appointment of barristers to support the Inquiry's work and has so far made six confirmed appointments. There are more appointments to be made shortly, and others to come as the Inquiry progresses with its work.
- Following engagement with a number of leading firms of solicitors, I have personally selected and appointed the Solicitor to the Inquiry, Martin Smith of Fieldfisher LLP.
- The procurement process to acquire a secure information technology system is well underway and, in the meantime, arrangements are in place to allow us to store confidential data securely.
- We have established a new and much more user-friendly website which goes live this morning, and we have commissioned a helpline for the public with trained advisers available to assist those who wish to engage with the Inquiry.
- We are making arrangements to appoint and fund support services for victims and survivors who come forward to assist the Inquiry. The Inquiry's survivor support service will have the expertise and knowledge to refer individuals to the right local support after their involvement with the Inquiry has come to an end.

- We are liaising with other relevant inquiries in the United Kingdom, as required by our terms of reference, and we have developed protocols with law enforcement and other institutions whose co-operation is necessary for the Inquiry's work.
- We have conducted discussions with the office of the Attorney General and the Crown Prosecution Service to secure legal protection for whistleblowers who come forward to the Inquiry, and we have sent out notices to 243 institutions requiring them to preserve records which the Inquiry may need to inspect.
- An academic advisory board has been appointed to provide specialist advice on the substantial research component of the Inquiry's work.

15. It is important to emphasise that this is the largest and most ambitious public inquiry ever established in England and Wales. Despite its unprecedented depth and breadth, I am determined to ensure that it does not become bogged down in the delays that have bedeviled some other public inquiries in this jurisdiction. My sincere hope and expectation is that it will be possible to conclude the Inquiry's work before the end of 2020. While that may seem a long way off, the public will not have to wait until then to hear the Inquiry's findings and recommendations. It is our intention to publish regular annual reports, beginning in 2016. These reports will include tangible and achievable recommendations, so that the Inquiry process can itself act as an engine for driving accountability and change. We will also publish more frequent updates on the Inquiry's work as it proceeds.

Scope and Purpose

16. Let me turn now to outline the ways in which the Inquiry will carry out its mandate. I want to start by setting out the limits to the Inquiry's terms of reference. It is important at the outset to stress that this Inquiry does not have the power to convict people of criminal offences or to punish them. Nor does it have the power to determine questions of civil liability or to award compensation. Those functions belong to the courts. That does not mean the Inquiry is powerless to make findings of fact that named people abused children, or to conclude that particular institutions failed in their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse. The naming of people that have been responsible for the sexual abuse of children, or institutions

that have been at fault in failing to protect children from abuse, is a core aspect of the Inquiry's function. The 2005 Act makes it clear that while a statutory inquiry cannot determine criminal or civil liability, it can make findings of fact about alleged conduct that would amount to a crime or a civil wrong. That distinction is reflected in paragraph 10 of the terms of reference of this Inquiry. Let me make it perfectly clear that this Inquiry will use its fact-finding powers to the full, and will not hesitate to make findings in relation to named individuals or institutions where the evidence justifies this.

17. The second limitation to the Inquiry's jurisdiction is geographical. The terms of reference are confined to institutions in England and Wales. The Inquiry's mandate does not extend to Scotland, Northern Ireland or the Channel Islands. Nor does it extend to the British Overseas Territories or the Crown Dependencies. There are separate inquiries into the same or similar issues currently underway in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Jersey, and this Inquiry will liaise closely with them. In general the Inquiry's terms of reference require it to refer any matter relevant to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Northern Ireland to the relevant inquiries or authorities in those jurisdictions. We are fully expecting the inquiries in those jurisdictions to adopt a reciprocal approach. None of which is to say that this Inquiry is incapable of examining anything that may have occurred outside England and Wales. Our jurisdiction includes national institutions such as the Armed Services which may operate overseas. In addition, certain institutions in England and Wales, such as schools, children's homes and other voluntary organisations, may be responsible in relation to conduct occurring where children in their care have been taken outside this jurisdiction. It is possible therefore that in certain circumstances the Inquiry may need to look at events occurring outside England and Wales. But it will do so because the event relates to an institution that is based, or carries out at least a part of its operations, within England and Wales.

18. The remaining limitations relate to the nature of the abuse that comes within the terms of reference. The Inquiry is not able to examine cases involving neglect or abuse of children other than sexual abuse, and it is not able to examine purely familial sexual abuse where there is no allegation of institutional failure. Some people may find these distinctions difficult to accept in principle, and there will certainly be borderline situations which do not fall easily into one category or the other. We recognise that children who have been sexually abused within the family may also

have been abused or exploited outside the family. We recognise that children who have been physically or emotionally abused or neglected at home or in an institution may also have been sexually abused, and that professionals may have failed to pick up on this or take appropriate action. We recognise too that institutional sexual abuse and exploitation are often accompanied by physical abuse and intimidation. I want to make it quite clear from the outset that cases of this kind are squarely within our terms of reference.

19. This Inquiry was, however, set up to examine the extent to which institutions have failed in their duty of care to protect children against sexual abuse, and to make recommendations to improve child protection for the future. It was inevitable therefore that some limitations would have to be placed on the focus of the Inquiry's work. None of that is to diminish in any way the experiences of those who have suffered other equally serious forms of abuse, and we will certainly refer any such allegations to the police if we receive them. More generally, we hope that the recommendations we make will also have an impact on improving institutional responses to all forms of child abuse.

20. So, to summarise, in order to establish whether, and to what the extent, institutions in England and Wales have failed in their duty of care to protect children, we want to hear from anyone who was sexually abused as a child in an institutional setting such as a care home, a school, a hospital or a religious organisation. We also want to hear from anyone who reported their sexual abuse to a person in authority such as a police officer, a social worker or a teacher, where the report was either ignored or not properly acted upon.

Five Workstreams

21. In order to manage investigations effectively, the Inquiry Panel has decided to divide the various institutional sectors that fall within the terms of reference into five distinct but complementary workstreams. Each workstream will be led by a member of the Panel, and will be supported by two junior counsel, a solicitor, and a team of professional researchers who are experienced in qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

(a) The first workstream relates to *Allegations of Abuse by People of Prominence in Public Life*. This encompasses enquiries relevant to people involved in central government, political parties, and the security and intelligence services, as well as present and former members of the special branch. It will also address the phenomenon of sexual abuse by those prominent in the media. This workstream will involve liaison with current and ongoing police investigations. I will lead this part of the Inquiry's work myself.

(b) The second workstream is *Education and Religion*. This will encompass abuse in religious settings (including all faiths and religious traditions), religious or faith-based education, secular private education, state education at all levels, and specialist forms of education including arts tuition and vocational training. This workstream will be led by Professor Malcolm Evans.

(c) The third workstream is *Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement*. This will include reviewing past and present policing strategies and priorities; historical failures in policing child sexual abuse; prosecutorial conduct – the failures and successes of the CPS and prosecuting counsel in child sex abuse cases; the role of the National Offender Management Service, including the Probation Service; and issues surrounding the sexual abuse of children (those up to 18) in custodial settings. It will also encompass the adequacy of responses to complaints about police conduct in this context, both within police forces and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). This workstream will be led by Dru Sharpling.

(d) The fourth work is *Local Authorities and Voluntary Organisations*. This includes local authority children's services; state-run children's homes; local authority members and staff; looked-after children in foster care or private institutions; children at risk but not in care; and adoption selection services. It includes voluntary organisations and children's charities, private care homes and private fostering and adoption services. It also includes other local authority functions relevant to child protection, such as youth services, leisure services and relevant regulatory activities. This workstream will be led by Professor Alexis Jay.

(e) The fifth workstream is *National and Private Service Organisations*. This will include the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces, the National Health Service and the Immigration Service. Other key public and private sector services falling within this workstream include internet service providers, the insurance industry and media organisations. This workstream will be led by Ivor Frank.

The Core Projects

22. The Inquiry must be capable of capturing the big picture across this broad range of institutions, and identifying the patterns that emerge in all five workstreams. However, it must also be capable of looking in fine detail at the workings of a cross-section of institutions within each sector that has failed children in the past, and of reaching findings of fact in individual cases where the evidence justifies this.

23. The key to ensuring that the Inquiry is able to discharge its mandate effectively and efficiently is to maintain a sense of procedural proportionality. We will hear from every victim or survivor of institutional abuse who wishes to bear witness to their experience, but we clearly cannot conduct a detailed forensic investigation of every case. The sheer scale of reported child sexual abuse means that we need to select specific paradigms of institutional failure to investigate in detail and to serve as examples of the wider patterns that exist. This does not in any way detract from the horrors of the cases that we do not investigate in depth. All of the information we receive will be factored into the Inquiry's analysis, and all allegations of child abuse will be passed to the police for investigation.

24. So that the Inquiry can achieve its key goals of being comprehensive, inclusive and thorough, and at the same time deliver an outcome which commands broad public confidence within a credible timeframe, the Inquiry Panel has decided to adopt three complementary ways of working, each of which will contribute to the work of all five workstreams. The Inquiry will therefore carry out three simultaneous projects: (a) the Research Project, (b) the Truth Project and (c) the Public Hearings Project.

The Research Project

25. The terms of reference specifically mandate the Inquiry to consider all of the information which is available from the various published and unpublished reviews, court cases and investigations which have so far been concluded in relation to each institutional sector. This requires a comprehensive literature and research review in order to bring together, for the first time, all of the work which has been done in the various fields, to consolidate the information that is available and to identify the information gaps that undoubtedly exist. Once this task is complete, the Inquiry will commission sector-specific empirical research where this is appropriate.

26. It will of course be essential to ensure that the Inquiry adopts a consistent and robust methodology for carrying out this research so that the results in one institutional sector can usefully be compared with those in another. This will require the adoption of a research plan, an ethics framework and quality control of the research produced. In order to guide and oversee the research project the Inquiry Panel has appointed an eminent Academic Advisory Board chaired by Jenny Pearce OBE, Professor of Young People and Public Policy at the University of Bedfordshire. The Board will include some of the country's lead academics in child protection: Marian Brandon, Professor of Social Work and Director of the Centre for Research on Children and Families at the University of East Anglia; Julia Davidson, Professor of Criminology in the School of Law at Middlesex University and Co-Director of the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies; Eileen Munro, Professor of Social Policy at the London School of Economics and June Thoburn, Professor Emeritus of Social Work at the University of East Anglia. Inquiry Panel member Professor Alexis Jay will also sit on the Academic Advisory Board.

27. The day-to-day management of the research project will be the responsibility of a full-time research director with professorial-level experience in the field of research into child sexual abuse. Under that overall management, each Inquiry workstream will have its own research team, with one lead researcher supported by two other researchers, experienced in quantitative and qualitative analysis respectively. Recruitment for these posts is currently underway. However, before the researchers can begin work they need clear guidance from the Inquiry's legal team, which is responsible for identifying the scope and priorities of the research project. I am pleased to be able to say that this first phase of the work is already underway and

should be completed by mid-September. Working in collaboration with Panel members, junior barristers have begun the process of assimilating the principal reports, cases, reviews and investigations relevant to each workstream, and are scoping the research work that needs to be carried out so as to provide a framework for the research teams once they have been appointed.

28. Each research project will be informed by the experiences of a small survivor reference group made up of people with relevant sectoral knowledge or experience.

The Truth Project

29. The Inquiry's terms of reference require the Inquiry Panel to consider the experience of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and to provide them with the opportunity to bear witness to the Inquiry. In order to do this, the Panel has established a national Truth Project, which will enable any victim or survivor of child sexual abuse which occurred in an institution or where there is institutional failure to protect a child, to share their experience at a private session of the Inquiry.

30. The process will be flexible and the proceedings will be conducted in a safe environment. The person sharing their experience will be able to bring friends, family or supporters with them, and facilities will be made available for those who cannot read or write, those with disabilities, and those for whom English is not their first language. I want to stress that those who bear witness in this way will never be made to feel as though they are being put on trial. We recognise that it can be very traumatic for people to talk about the abuse they suffered and we have deliberately planned the process to be as informal as possible. The only people in the room will be a member of the Inquiry team, the person who has come to share their experience and anyone they have brought with them. A member of the Inquiry's survivor support service will also be on hand if needed. Wherever possible, we will accommodate requests to ensure that those attending the Truth Project are able to speak to a support worker of their own gender.

31. The process will have no direct legal consequences. The Inquiry will not make individual factual findings on the basis of what is said during these private sessions. However, the information will be recorded, anonymised and aggregated for the purpose of analysis and will feed directly into the Inquiry's research and analytical work. In this way, the experiences of victims and survivors will be the core currency

of the Inquiry. The Academic Advisory Board will provide guidance to ensure academic rigour and accountability throughout this process.

32. The Inquiry will not publish the name of anyone who has shared their experience with the Truth Project. It will, however, publish a companion volume to its annual reports which reflects the information provided by people who have shared their experiences with the Inquiry through the Truth Project in a suitably anonymised form.

33. Participation in the Truth Project will be more than an exercise in catharsis. It will enable the Inquiry to piece together a broader picture of the scale and nature of institutional child sexual abuse in England and Wales. It will also enable victims and survivors to contribute to the creation of shared knowledge, and it will enable the Inquiry to reach conclusions about why such crimes went unreported, and undetected, for so long, leaving other children to be abused in later years.

34. Anyone who doubts the value of establishing a truth process of this kind need only consider the effectiveness of the private sessions run by the Australian Royal Commission to appreciate the intrinsic merits of this exercise. The Truth Project we are putting in place closely follows the successful arrangements adopted in Australia, where the response has been remarkable. The Royal Commission receives an average of 40 new requests each week from victims and survivors who want to attend a private session to bear witness to their experience. By the end of 2015 they estimate that they will have held 4000 such hearings.

35. Those wishing to participate in the Truth Project will in the first instance need to speak to a trained member of the Inquiry staff, who will make a short written summary of what they wish to say. This can be done in person or over the phone. As I have said, facilities will be made available for those who cannot read or write, for those with disabilities and for those for whom English is not their first language. We will in due course have staff available in a number of locations around the country for this purpose. Where appropriate, Inquiry staff will take this initial information in a person's own home or at another location of their choice. We will also make arrangements to visit victims and survivors who are in custody.

36. There will be no obligation on any person to speak about their experiences at a private session unless they positively wish to do so. The experiences of those who

have been interviewed by the Inquiry, but choose not to come to a private session, will still form an important part of the material considered by the Inquiry.

37. One of the practices adopted by the Australian Royal Commission is to encourage people who attend its private hearings to leave a short message as a legacy for the nation. That seems to us a very positive idea, and is one that we propose to adopt. This means that anyone who engages with the Inquiry will also be offered the opportunity to leave a short written message (with assistance if necessary) about any aspect of their experience. The message might be a sentence or two about what happened to them, or about the effect it has had on them or others, or it could be an opinion on what should be done to provide better protection for children in the future. These anonymous statements will be assembled together for ultimate publication alongside the Inquiry's reports, and will be posted on the Inquiry's website.

The Public Hearings Project

38. The third component of the Inquiry's work will more closely resemble that of a conventional public inquiry. Within each of the five workstreams, the Inquiry Panel will select a number of paradigm cases that appear to them to be illustrative of the pattern of institutional failings alleged in the area under consideration. This may relate to a particular institution or group of institutions about which the Inquiry has received apparently credible information of institutional failure to protect children from sexual abuse. It may be the case of a particular individual in a position of influence who appears to have been enabled to commit sexual offences against children through multiple institutional failings. Or it may be a national organisation that appears to have exhibited repeated or systemic failings over a period of years. As with any public inquiry there will be an initial phase of investigation and evidence-gathering. The public hearing will then proceed in two parts. The first part will examine the particular institution or situation, and the second part will focus on the wider institutional context and the lessons to be learned from that sector. It is likely that there will be at least five such modular inquiries for each workstream, making a total of 25 modular inquiries in all.

39. Let me outline the process in a little more detail. The lead Panel member, working with the Inquiry's legal team, will identify a suitable situation for each modular inquiry. They will then conduct an investigation on behalf of the Inquiry,

focusing on the individual institution or situation under examination in part one and on the wider contextual issues in part two. Institutions whose actions are called into question will be required to provide all relevant documentary evidence to the Inquiry well in advance, to answer questions and to nominate individual representatives to attend to give evidence in person. Where it proves necessary to do so, I will not hesitate to issue orders under section 21 of the 2005 Act compelling the production of evidence and the attendance of witnesses.

40. At the appropriate time, the Inquiry will put out a general call for evidence and will be open to receive representations, not only from those individuals and institutions immediately involved in the situation under investigation, but also from individuals or organisations with relevant evidence to give, or with submissions to make, in relation to the wider context and the lessons to be learned. This may include representative bodies from the sector concerned, regulators, non-governmental organisations or unincorporated campaign groups.

41. Testimony will be given at a public hearing presided over by a combination of Panel members, including the Panel member who led the investigation. We very much hope that victims and survivors will feel able to testify at these hearings but the Inquiry Panel will also accept documentary evidence of their experiences, including witness statements made to the Inquiry. Victims and survivors who wish to testify without their identity or appearance being made public will be able to do so if they wish, and a full range of special (protective) measures will be available including the use of screens, face and/or voice distortion, and the use of video links or video-recorded testimony. Where appropriate, vulnerable witnesses will be able to have the assistance of an intermediary or support person while they are speaking.

42. The 2005 Act contains a power to order any person to attend and give evidence at a hearing. I have decided as a matter of policy that this power will not be used to compel victims and survivors to give evidence about their experiences of being abused. While it would obviously be of assistance to the Inquiry to hear as much direct oral evidence from victims and survivors as possible, they must never be made to carry the weight of proving anything. The focus of attention must remain firmly on scrutinising the institutions concerned and their handling of cases of child sexual abuse.

43. The proceedings will generally be open to the public, although there may be parts of the hearing that need to be heard in closed session. Open hearings will be recorded and transcribed, with the daily transcripts made available on the Inquiry website. The Inquiry Panel will invite representations from all core participants about media coverage at the relevant time, and will determine these applications on their merits. However, particular attention will be paid to the need to ensure that victims and survivors are able to testify under conditions in which they feel safe.

44. Given the breadth of the Inquiry's canvas, and the number of modular inquiries that will need to be completed, it will be important to ensure that the public hearings are not unduly prolonged. As a general rule of thumb, the Inquiry Panel expects the modular hearings to last between four and six weeks each (including opening and closing submissions) and will make the selection of oral evidence to be called with this target in mind.

45. At the conclusion of each modular inquiry the core participants will be given an opportunity to make closing statements and file closing written submissions. Time and page limits will be applied. The Inquiry Panel will consider the evidence and submissions and reach findings of fact on the appropriate (flexible) standard of proof. Where appropriate, the Inquiry Panel will issue warning letters to those liable to be criticised. The Inquiry will publish reports on each modular inquiry as soon as possible after it is completed, reflecting its conclusions about the individual case, the wider context and the lessons learned. All reports will be approved by the full Inquiry Panel before publication and will reflect the assessment of the Inquiry as a whole.

Core Participant Status

46. Rule 5 of the 2006 Inquiry Rules permit the Chair to designate a person as a core participant, with their consent, if (a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates; (b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or (c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.

47. It is important to stress that the Chair of a statutory inquiry is not obliged to grant core participant status to a person or organisation that meets these criteria. Under the rules, the Chair has a very wide discretion. That discretion must of course

be exercised fairly, consistently and with an open mind, but it must also be exercised with regard to the need to avoid unnecessary cost, and bearing in mind the inquisitorial nature of the proceedings.

48. Those who are designated as core participants have the right to disclosure of evidence relevant to the particular modular inquiry they are involved in, and the right to make opening and closing statements at any hearing. They also have the right to suggest lines of questioning to be pursued by Counsel to the Inquiry, and to make representations to the Inquiry Panel about direct questioning and any relevant issue of law that may arise.

49. A person granted core participant status is entitled to appoint lawyers, who must be designated as the person's recognised legal representative for the purposes of the Inquiry, although it is open to the Chair to direct that two or more core participants be represented by the same lawyers. This does not, in itself, mean that the lawyers will automatically be paid out of the Inquiry's budget or other public funding. The provision of legal funding for participants is governed by section 40 of the 2005 Act, which allows the Chair to make an award of legal costs in favour of any person who has "such an interest in the proceedings or the outcome of the Inquiry as to justify such an award". Such an award may be made whether a person is designated as a core participant or not. Where an award is made in principle the level of legal fees will be fixed in advance and closely controlled.

50. All applications for core participant status and legal funding must of course be considered on their individual merits, applying the statutory criteria. However I have come to the provisional view that it would not be appropriate to grant core participant status, or legal funding, to any individual or entity in respect of the entirety of the Inquiry. The need for a focused and proportionate approach, coupled with the statutory imperative to avoid unnecessary cost, requires that such applications be considered in the context of the role that the individual or entity may play in the separate element(s) of the Inquiry's work.

51. The question of core participant status does not of course arise in relation to the Inquiry's research project, and my provisional view is that it will generally be unnecessary to grant core participant status or legal funding to those who come forward to bear witness to their experiences as part of the Truth Project. The process we envisage in that context will be informal and entirely non-adversarial. There could

be exceptions to this in the case of individuals with particular needs or where unusual legal issues arise, and so I would not want to be prescriptive. But as a general proposition, the Inquiry will be in a position to provide the necessary support for those who wish to share their experience in a confidential setting under the Truth Project.

52. The Public Hearings Project is different. Given the judicial nature of those proceedings, and the issues to which they are likely to give rise, I have come to the provisional view that core participant status should be available to individuals, groups of individuals, and entities who meet the criteria laid down in the rules (that is, they have a significant role or interest in the inquiry, or are liable to be criticised). Each application will be given individual consideration but core participant status is likely to be granted to individual victims or survivors (particularly those who intend to testify); individuals and organisations that are potentially open to criticism; and to any other individual, organisation or entity that can demonstrate that it meets the criteria in Rule 5 of the 2006 Rules (whether in relation to the first part of the modular inquiry or the second).

53. It does not, of course, follow that every individual or entity will be entitled to funding for legal representation at such a hearing. Where individuals or entities have similar interests, and it would be fair for them to be jointly represented, I am likely to make an order under Rule 7 of the Inquiry Rules requiring their interests to be represented by one firm of solicitors and one counsel. I will also maintain close control of the costs incurred. I would generally expect major organisations and institutions that are open to criticism to be in a position to fund their own legal representation.

54. Finally, there are likely to be organisations that come under scrutiny even though they are not the subject of one of the modular inquiries. If such an organisation is liable to criticism or otherwise meets the statutory criteria then I would be sympathetic to an application for core participant status on that ground.

55. The Solicitor to the Inquiry is available to provide guidance to anyone needing clarification about the application of the rules governing core participant status.

56. Those who give evidence at a modular Inquiry hearing will be questioned by Counsel to the Inquiry. Core participants (whether they are legally represented or not) will not ordinarily be permitted to put questions to witnesses directly. Instead,

they will be required to provide Counsel to the Inquiry with a list of the questions that their client wishes to put. Counsel to the Inquiry will determine whether or not the question should be asked in the form proposed, in some other form, or not at all. The Panel will retain a discretion to allow direct questioning by legal representatives of core participants, but it is likely to exercise that discretion sparingly, with due regard to the need to protect vulnerable witnesses, the need to keep costs to a minimum, and the need to maintain procedural proportionality.

Engagement with Victims and Survivors

57. For the purposes of the Inquiry we use the expression “victims and survivors” to describe people who were sexually abused in childhood. We recognise that some people are more comfortable with one term rather than the other, according to their own perception and experience, and that the two terms carry different meanings for different people. Similarly, we use the expression “non-recent abuse” rather than “historical abuse”, since for many victims and survivors their experiences are an ever-present part of their daily lives.

58. In establishing this Inquiry the Home Secretary said that she wanted to ensure that victims and survivors were at the heart of its work. Section 9 of the Inquiries Act 2005 prohibits the appointment of any person as a member of an Inquiry Panel if she or he has a direct interest in the matters to which the Inquiry relates. It would not therefore have been appropriate for the Home Secretary to appoint victims or survivors to the main Panel of this statutory Inquiry. However it is a central axiom of the Inquiry’s mandate that victims and survivors must have the greatest possible range of opportunities to participate, contribute and bear witness to their experiences. We have put in place a number of measures in order to achieve this.

59. On 12 March 2015 I announced that the Inquiry would establish a Victims and Survivors’ Consultative Panel (VSCP) to assist and advise the Inquiry on all aspects of its work. The eight-member VSCP is to be an integral part of the Inquiry’s operational team and will work with each of the other components of the Inquiry. It is to be established according to agreed terms of reference and will have its own dedicated legal adviser and administrative support. Appointment to the VSCP is remunerated by the payment of an honorarium and requires 4 working days per month. We expect the VSCP to provide consultative advice on the ways in which the Inquiry engages with victims and survivors, ensuring that appropriate support is

identified to take account of their needs, and in promoting a safe environment for the making of disclosures. More broadly, the VSCP will also assist in the substantive work of the Inquiry, supporting the research strand, advising on particular institutional workstreams, and helping to formulate recommendations that properly reflect the needs of victims and survivors.

60. On 9 April 2015 the Inquiry put out an open call for nominations to the VSCP, indicating that we were looking to appoint individuals with knowledge and experience of the issues relating to child sexual abuse; with a proven history of collaborative working; and with a current mandate to represent the views of a defined group or groups of victims and survivors. We received a significant number of strong nominations from a range of people with relevant experience. Following a selection process which ranked candidates against the published criteria, a shortlist of the strongest candidates was drawn up for interview. The interviews were conducted by me and members of the Inquiry Panel, assisted by Counsel to the Inquiry and the Secretary to the Inquiry. All candidates have now been informed of the outcome of the selection process, and we are hoping that the VSCP will start work very soon.

61. I am pleased to be able announce this morning that the members of the VSCP are Sheila Coates, Lucy Duckworth, Fay Maxted, Michael May, Peter McKelvie, Peter Saunders, Chris Tuck and Daniel Wolstencroft. I wish to express my personal gratitude to each of the newly appointed VSCP members for putting themselves forward to serve, and I look forward to a close collaboration with them as the Inquiry moves into its operational phase. The role they have undertaken is not an easy one, but it is critically important. They have each taken a brave decision to commit to the success of the Inquiry and to ensuring that it hears the voices of victims and survivors in all dimensions of its work. The Inquiry is putting arrangements in place to ensure that the members of the VSCP have the necessary level of support to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

62. Because they will be involved in confidential parts of the Inquiry's work, VSCP members will not be free to discuss all aspects of their activities in public. Those who work in this field understand better than most the need for confidentiality. The VSCP could not provide effective advice to the Inquiry, or provide comments on draft proposals, if all of its discussions were to be made public. Like the Inquiry Panel itself, the VSCP will therefore issue regular collective statements to inform the public

about its work, but its members will not discuss other aspects of the Inquiry in any public forum.

63. The VSCP is not the only means by which the Inquiry will engage with victims and survivors. We aim to ensure the widest possible participation. To that end the Inquiry will establish a Victims and Survivors Forum which will be a self-nominating network for discussing and contributing to the work of the Inquiry. The Forum will provide an opportunity for victims and survivors, and those who represent them, to ask questions, to debate the work of the Inquiry, and to make suggestions. We will be consulting with the VSCP and others on the best means to achieve meaningful participation through this Forum.

64. We will also continue to work with those who represent particular groups of victims and survivors and to ensure that groups which are currently under-represented are brought fully into the Inquiry process. In relation to the latter, we are working to find the best ways of incorporating groups representing people with disabilities and people from black and minority ethnic communities who have been subjected to child sexual abuse.

65. But perhaps the most important way victims and survivors can take a central part in the Inquiry is by contacting us and telling us about their experiences. Striving to reach some of the most marginalised and isolated survivors is paramount in ensuring that all voices are heard. Arrangements are now in place to maximise the accessibility of the Inquiry and to provide support for those who come forward to help us.

66. First of all, I am today launching a new Inquiry website which provides the quickest and simplest way for victims and survivors to communicate with the Secretariat. The website uses plain English and is compatible with software for people who are visually impaired. Using simple step-by-step guidance and information forms, victims and survivors can tell us about their experience in as much or as little detail as they wish. That will be the most helpful and accurate way of recording relevant information. A person who shares her or his experience is not committed to further co-operation with the Inquiry. But the important point is that those who wish to speak to us will be heard, and their experiences will be recorded.

67. I am also able to announce that as from today the Inquiry will be operating the IICSA Helpline. The aim of the helpline is to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to engage with the work of the Inquiry. Callers will be able to ask questions, seek clarification about the Inquiry's work, provide information about their own experiences, or suggest lines of inquiry. Anyone who wishes to disclose information about child sexual abuse will be offered the opportunity to provide information to a trained member of staff who will take down the details of what they have to say. The number to call is 0800 917 1000, and lines will be open from 9 am to 9 pm, Monday to Friday.

68. So those victims and survivors who wish to tell us about their experiences, or just wish to know more about the work of the Inquiry, now have four different ways to communicate with us: They can write to the address on the Inquiry's website; they can send us an email at the general inquiries email address; they can use the contact form for sharing their experiences or bringing information to our attention; or they can call the IICSA Helpline. We recognise of course that not everyone knows about the Inquiry or has access to the internet. So we will in due course mount a public information campaign to raise awareness of the Inquiry's work and the opportunities that exist to contribute to it.

69. This is a national Inquiry and it needs to have national coverage. Therefore, in addition to our Millbank headquarters, we will be establishing a number of satellite offices around England and Wales. Each of these offices will be staffed by specialist advisers who can assist victims and survivors by recording their experiences in face-to-face meetings and by providing them with appropriate support. The programme for the establishment of these offices will be rolled out across the country over the next year or so, with the first office opening in the autumn of this year.

70. We recognise that there is more to be done to improve communication with victims and survivors, and so we are working to develop strategies aimed at widening access for those whose voices too often go unheard. In particular, we are looking to develop specific outreach initiatives for victims and survivors from black and minority ethnic communities; people with disabilities; people with mental illness; and people who are homeless or in custody. We also want to find other ways of reaching out to people for whom English is not their first language and people who have literacy

difficulties. We are also conscious of the under-reporting of all forms of sexual abuse among boys and young men, and will be taking steps to investigate and address this.

71. We know that for some people, engaging with the Inquiry will be a difficult process. We recognise that trauma, fear and shame can be major barriers to disclosure, and that for many people the painful memories of abuse will be re-triggered by the process of discussing their experiences with someone from the Inquiry. The Australian Royal Commission, for example, found that it took an average of over 20 years for people who had been sexually abused in childhood to disclose this fact to a person in authority. Building trust, and enabling people to speak in an environment in which they feel safe, is a priority. We are very much aware that, for some people, coming forward to the Inquiry may be the first time they have ever disclosed. Even the fact that the Inquiry is taking place has caused some victims and survivors to experience anxiety and distress. The need to provide adequate support is therefore a paramount consideration.

72. To meet this need the Inquiry is securing specialist sexual violence advocates to provide advocacy and support to victims and survivors of abuse who choose to engage with the Inquiry. They will be able to explain what will happen when a person chooses to speak to the Inquiry as part of the Truth Project and will support them through this process. They will also be able to refer people to specialist counselling services in their area for ongoing and long-term support. They will strive to provide a safe space for victims and survivors to ask questions, discuss options and engage with the Inquiry. The Inquiry is currently working with a specialist provider to ensure that support is available immediately.

73. Delivering an engagement programme which provides unfettered access for all victims and survivors in England and Wales is obviously a major undertaking and it will require a considerable investment of human and material resources.

74. Let me turn now to explain what will happen to information supplied to us by victims and survivors. Providing the person concerned has given us their contact information, they will be contacted by a member of the Inquiry team and given the opportunity to provide more details, which will be recorded in writing. This may not happen immediately, because we are still working to put all the necessary arrangements in place, and we are not yet able to ascertain the likely levels of uptake, but an appointment will be made at a suitable time and place. Support will be

provided for this process. The person concerned will then be provided with an opportunity to bear witness at a private session of the Truth Project. Again, this may take time to arrange, as we will be establishing the regional offices over a period of time, but we are committed to ensuring that every victim or survivor who wishes to take part in the Truth Project will have the opportunity to do so. If a person chooses not to come and share their experience at a private session, the information they have provided will still be analysed and fed into the Inquiry's investigations.

75. Any information provided to the Inquiry by victims and survivors will remain confidential to the Inquiry, will be held securely, and will not be disclosed publicly or passed to any other agency without the consent of the person who provided it. There is one exception to this principle. We are obliged by our terms of reference to pass any allegation of child abuse to the police. However we will not pass on a person's name or contact details without their consent, unless it is necessary to protect a child at risk of continuing abuse. The police have undertaken to hold any information provided by the Inquiry securely and confidentially, and the person who provided the information will not be obliged to provide a further statement to the police or support an investigation or prosecution if they do not wish to do so. Those contacting the Inquiry will be asked to make it clear whether or not they want the police to take the matter further, and their views will be taken into account by the police. But, either way, the Inquiry cannot hold information about the commission of criminal offences against children without passing it on for analysis by the police.

Securing Evidence about Institutions

76. I have already mentioned that under section 21 of the 2005 Act there is a power to order the production of documents and the attendance of witnesses. A failure to comply with such an order without reasonable excuse is an offence punishable by imprisonment. It is also an offence for a person, during the course of an Inquiry, to destroy, alter or tamper with evidence that may be relevant to an Inquiry, or deliberately to do an act with the intention of suppressing evidence or preventing it being disclosed to the Inquiry. I trust that message will go out loud and clear to all State and non-State institutions, whose actions may fall within the Inquiry's broad terms of reference.

77. However, to put the position beyond doubt, I have taken steps to issue retention instructions to a very wide range of institutions in order to put them on

notice that the organisations for which they are responsible must preserve all records relating to the care of children by their institution without limit of time so that they remain available for inspection by the Inquiry. For central government departments and relevant public bodies I have issued the instructions through the Cabinet Secretary to the Permanent Secretaries of all 24 government departments and, through them, to a wide range of other public bodies and institutions including the Prison Service, the Court Service and Armed Services. I have written to the most senior officials in all local authorities in England and Wales to cover all education authorities, children's services, safeguarding boards, and state schools. I have written to 48 Chief Officers of Police; to NHS England and Public Health Wales to cover all 157 NHS Trusts and the hospitals within those Trusts; and to the leaders of 18 prominent religious organisations. In all, I have written to 243 institutions, many of which have cascaded the information to other agencies. The texts of the letters are available on the Inquiry's website. No institution – whether they have received a letter or not – can be in any doubt of the extent of their duty to preserve records for the Inquiry, or of the consequences of failing to do so.

78. One area of concern has been the need to offer whistleblower protection to those who pass evidence to the Inquiry. I am pleased to be able to announce today that we have secured strong legal protection for whistleblowers. Following a process of discussion with the offices of the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions, an agreement was reached pursuant to which the Attorney General issued an undertaking on 15 June 2015 that no document or evidence provided to the Inquiry will result in, or be used in, any prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts or any prosecution for unlawful possession of the evidence in question. The full terms of the undertaking have been published this morning on the Inquiry's website. I am satisfied that this undertaking provides the greatest possible protection for whistleblowers, consistent with the requirements of the public interest, and I am grateful to the Attorney General for providing it.

79. In the course of its work the Inquiry may need to inspect files held by the security and intelligence services or information held by GCHQ. The statutory powers under the Inquiries Act 2005 and the Inquiries Rules 2006 make special arrangements for the handling of classified material which can be inspected under secure conditions. Where necessary, sensitive or classified information can be made the subject of a notice or order restricting its publication or disclosure, and it can be

tested in a closed hearing. So there is no obstacle to prevent the Inquiry from having access to even the most sensitive information. I have been given the necessary levels of security clearance to inspect material held by the agencies, as have members of the Inquiry's legal team, and I have no reason to doubt that I will receive the full co-operation of the agencies in the provision of the information I need to inspect.

80. In order to ensure that it has the most accurate and up-to-date information available, the Inquiry is working in collaboration with Operation Hydrant, a national police initiative established in 2014 to oversee the investigation of non-recent child sexual abuse within institutions or by people of public prominence. Operation Hydrant is a central co-ordination hub for all police investigations meeting these criteria, and which are currently being conducted by police forces in England and Wales. According to the most recent published figures, Operation Hydrant is supervising 666 current police investigations into non-recent sexual abuse of children in institutions including schools, children's homes, medical establishments, youth clubs, sports venues, and military and custodial institutions. There were 261 investigations ongoing into non-recent sexual abuse by persons of public prominence in the media, politics and sport.

81. The close interface between the Inquiry and Operation Hydrant will include the appointment of dedicated liaison officers whose function is to manage the flow of information in both directions. These posts are funded by the Inquiry from its annual budget. A draft operational protocol has been developed between the two organisations to ensure co-ordination and to guarantee the security and confidentiality of information. Operation Hydrant will feed into the work of the Inquiry through the provision of detailed briefings about ongoing and completed investigations, and any reports of child abuse received by the Inquiry will be automatically referred to Operation Hydrant for supervision and investigation by the appropriate police force. That process is already underway. Under the terms of the protocol, any written request for evidence that the Inquiry wishes to make to a police force in England and Wales will be communicated via Operation Hydrant and will, if necessary, be backed up by an order issued under section 21 of the 2005 Act. Operation Hydrant will also act as the co-ordination hub for requests to police forces outside England and Wales. In order to preserve the integrity of ongoing police investigations, the Inquiry has put in place arrangements to enable such information

to be provided in confidence and, if appropriate, to be subject to a restriction order under the Act.

82. A related question is the need to ensure that the work of the Inquiry does not imperil any ongoing or contemplated prosecution. My officials have been working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service to produce a draft protocol between the two organisations. Under the terms of the protocol the CPS will provide all information requested by the Inquiry, together with any other relevant information, on request and within defined timelines. For its part, the Inquiry has undertaken to guarantee the security and confidentiality of the information provided, and to consult with CPS about the timing and extent of any disclosure, and about the necessity for redacting material relating to any investigation or prosecution decision before it is published. The overriding imperative is to ensure that the Inquiry is able to have access to key information held by the CPS without prejudicing the effective prosecution of any offence. If there is no potential risk to an ongoing prosecution the Inquiry will make the information public at an appropriate time, subject only to restrictions or redactions that are strictly necessary due to legal restrictions, in order to protect an important public interest or to protect any children concerned.

83. On 29 April 2015 I announced the Inquiry's decision to conduct an independent investigation into the issues surrounding the allegations of sexual abuse against Lord Grevelle Janner. Now that the CPS has decided to commence a prosecution against Lord Janner, it would not be appropriate for the Inquiry to make any public statements on the case until it has been concluded. The Inquiry's investigation however remains ongoing and is focused on issues of institutional responsibility. The Director of Public Prosecutions has fully co-operated with the Inquiry and has provided all relevant documentation to the Inquiry for review. The Inquiry team will of course follow the criminal proceedings closely.

Appointments and Budget

84. The official appointments required under the 2005 Act are that of Chair; the Inquiry Panel; the office of Secretary to the Inquiry; the office of Counsel to the Inquiry; and the office of Solicitor to the Inquiry.

85. The Secretary to the Inquiry is John O'Brien. He has the function of carrying out the administration and management of the Inquiry, and is also the Senior

Accountable Officer, responsible for the proper management of public resources and expenditure on the Inquiry's business. This means that it is his duty to ensure that public funds are spent responsibly and in a manner that provides best value for money. He and I have worked together over the past three months to identify the core operational requirements and to construct a detailed business plan for delivering them.

86. The Secretary to the Inquiry is supported by a senior management team and a Secretariat who are responsible for handling the Inquiry's practical operations. The Secretariat also encompasses the research teams, the victims and survivors' outreach teams, the investigation managers and the media unit.

87. Counsel to the Inquiry is Ben Emmerson QC, who is supported by Hugh Davies QC as Deputy Counsel to the Inquiry and by Toby Fisher as Junior Counsel to the Inquiry. Given the sheer scale of the task ahead of us, I have authorised the appointment of five teams comprising two junior counsel, working part time, to assist the Panel members leading each of the Inquiry's five workstreams. In due course, when the Public Hearings Project becomes operational, I will be instructing one additional QC to lead each separate hearing. I want to underline that these appointments will be made for the duration of each modular inquiry and not for the duration of the Inquiry as a whole. Given the number of modules that will be running simultaneously, this is the most efficient and cost-effective way of ensuring effective representation of the interests of all parties.

88. The Solicitor to the Inquiry is Martin Smith of Fieldfisher LLP, who comes to us with considerable experience of managing investigations and inquiries. The Solicitor to the Inquiry is responsible for the day-to-day management of all the legal aspects of the Inquiry's work, including the taking of witness statements, the securing of evidence from institutions, the operation of the Inquiry's legal database, the management of hearings and the processing of applications for core participant status and legal funding.

89. In addition to the principal statutory posts, and their staff, the Inquiry also includes the Victims and Survivors' Consultative Panel and the Academic Advisory Board. I have already outlined the functions and membership of these two working groups.

90. The Home Secretary has now approved a delegated budget of £17.9 million for the operation of the Inquiry over the coming year. This is a large sum but it has been carefully costed and is essential to meet the Inquiry's core operational requirements. I will be publishing the details of how the money is to be spent on the Inquiry's website in the next few days. We have of course ensured that the budget is planned, and the money spent, in accordance with the principles of good administration that govern all public expenditure. However, in an inquiry on this scale, value for money can really only be measured by evaluating the practical impact of our work over the next five years or so. Reducing the level of child sexual abuse in this country is not a choice between competing priorities; it is an imperative. Its value cannot be calculated in monetary terms. It is the inherent right of every child to experience a childhood free of sexual abuse and intimidation – to be allowed to grow up and develop without trauma. And it is the inherent right of every adult who was sexually abused as a child to see those responsible being held to account. The right to reparation in this context includes the right to truth; the right to adequate compensation from institutions that are at fault; the right to psychological support where necessary; and the right to know that everything possible is being done to reduce the risk of harm to others. This Inquiry aims to contribute to the realisation of these rights by putting alleged institutional failures under the spotlight, by holding those found responsible to account, and by making practical recommendations for reducing the risks to children in the future.

Concluding remarks

91. I want to conclude by reinforcing the Inquiry's call to victims and survivors, or those with information about institutional failings, to come forward. At the same time I want to lay down a challenge to those institutions that have, or have had, a duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse. I urge you to take a proactive stance towards the Inquiry – to review your files, records and procedures voluntarily and to take the initiative to self-report instances of institutional failure – rather than waiting for us to come and see you. Above all, review your current safeguarding policies to make sure that they are consistent with best practice, and take whatever steps you can to provide a safer environment for children now.