
Update – 5 November 2019

This update sets out the work that the Inquiry has undertaken since the Terms of Reference were finalised on 11 July 2019. Any confidential information relating to that work has been removed.

Meetings with Stakeholders

The Chair and the Commissioning Body have held introductory meetings with eight stakeholder organisations/individuals, who the Inquiry considers will have information and hold material that is relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. There has also been correspondence with one further stakeholder, who the Chair and the Commissioning Body will be meeting in the coming weeks.

Since those introductory meetings, engagement continues, with further meetings and correspondence taking place to enable relevant information and documents to be disclosed to the Inquiry. This has included the Inquiry making a number of formal requests for documents.

Disclosure

To date, the Inquiry has received approximately 3,950 documents/31,900 pages of material which is potentially relevant to its Terms of Reference. The source of this material includes individual witnesses and Telford & Wrekin Council. The Inquiry however is anticipating that it will receive significantly more material both from Telford & Wrekin Council and other stakeholders in due course.

The Inquiry continues to work through and analyse this material to help inform its investigations.

List of Issues and FAQs

The Inquiry has recently updated its website to include a List of Issues and FAQs. The List of Issues has been prepared in order to provide guidance as to the interpretation of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference and give an indication of the issues that will be examined during the Chair's work. The FAQs are intended to help people interested in the Inquiry's work by providing answers to some of the common questions they may have. These documents are accessible here:

www.iitcse.com/key-documents

Witness Support Service to Assist the Inquiry's Work

Shortly following the final Terms of Reference being approved, the Inquiry asked Telford & Wrekin Council to commission and pay for separate, dedicated support services, independent from both the Inquiry and the Council, which will provide support to any witness who wants it. The Chair recognised that providing evidence may be a very difficult process for some people; this will be particularly the case for victims/survivors and their families, but for others too. It is extremely important that witnesses are properly supported throughout the Inquiry process, as their continued contribution will be vital to the Chair's work. Therefore, the Chair felt it was important to ensure that these services were accessible before individuals met with the Inquiry and provided their evidence. Those services were due to be in place during the course of September 2019.

Unfortunately, there has been a delay with these services being established. This means that the Inquiry has not been able to make appointments and meet with witnesses as quickly as it would have liked. The Chair is however hopeful that the support services will be in place over the coming weeks.

Witnesses

Since the Terms of Reference have been finalised, the Inquiry has spoken to a number of potential witnesses; in the majority of cases to answer queries about the process of giving evidence. This includes contact being made by 14 new witnesses. This is in addition to the potential witnesses that contacted the Inquiry prior to the Terms of Reference being finalised.

In addition, the Inquiry has proactively contacted seven witnesses seeking their evidence and arranging meetings, where these individuals might be prepared to give evidence without the availability of witness support, if it was considered appropriate to do so. This has ensured that the Inquiry's work has been able to continue whilst the support service is still being established.

The Inquiry has now met with a small number of those witnesses, to take their evidence. The evidence that has been provided will be invaluable to the Chair's work.

CONTACT THE INQUIRY

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