

**Preliminary Hearing on allegations of child sexual abuse involving children in the care of Lambeth Council**

**Date: Thursday 24 March 2016**

**Start time: 10:30am**

**Finish: Expected by 1:00pm**

**Location: Court 73, Royal Courts of Justice (RCJ), Strand, London WC2A 2LL (Entry via the Bell Yard North entrance - opens at 9:30am)**

Hon. Dame Lowell Goddard, Chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, will hold a Preliminary Hearing on 24 March 2016. The Chair of the Inquiry will hear submissions from Counsel to the Inquiry and others on the following topics in relation to the Inquiry's investigation into allegations of child sexual abuse involving children in the care of Lambeth Council:

- a) Applications for designation as Core Participant;
- b) Submissions on scope of the investigation;
- c) Broadcast of proceedings;
- d) Timetable for further hearings and applications for anonymity and funding under section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005;
- e) Any further applications from those designated as Core Participants.

**Investigation Scope**

1. The Inquiry will investigate the nature and extent of, and institutional responses to, the sexual abuse of children in the care of Lambeth Council ('the Council'), including those cared for in children's homes, by foster carers and/or by adoptive parents. The investigation will incorporate case specific investigations and a review of information available from published and unpublished reports and reviews, court cases, and previous investigations.
2. In doing so, the Inquiry will consider the experiences of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse while in the care of the Council, and investigate:
  - 2.1. the nature and extent of the sexual abuse of children in the care of the Council;
  - 2.2. the nature and extent of the failings of the Council to protect such children from sexual abuse;
  - 2.3. the appropriateness of the response of the Council, law enforcement agencies, prosecuting authorities, and other public authorities or statutory agencies to reports of child sexual abuse involving children cared for by the Council, and/or reports of child sexual abuse by individuals, who were employed by or contracted by the Council;
  - 2.4. the extent to which the Council sought to investigate, learn lessons, implement changes, and provide support and reparations to victims and survivors, in response to:
    - a) allegations that individuals with access to children cared for by the Council had sexually abused children;
    - b) criminal investigations and prosecutions and/or civil litigation in relation to alleged abuse of children within the care of the Council;
    - c) reports, reviews and inquiries into child sexual abuse;

- d) safeguarding, including but not limited to the Clough Report, the Harris Report, the Barratt Report, and the Children’s Homes in Lambeth Enquiry; and/or
- e) other external guidance;
- 2.5. the adequacy of the policies and practices adopted by the Council in relation to safeguarding and child protection, including considerations of governance, training, recruitment, leadership, reporting and investigation of child sexual abuse, disciplinary procedures, information sharing with outside agencies, and approach to reparations;
- 2.6. the extent to which children who were sexually abused may have had special educational needs and/or any other form of special need or vulnerability and whether that may have made them more vulnerable to sexual abuse;
- 2.7. the extent to which there was a culture within the Council which inhibited the proper investigation, exposure, prevention, and reparation for child sexual abuse; and
- 2.8. the appropriateness of the relevant inspection and regulatory regimes.
- 3. Specific matters to be considered within the investigations may include, but are not limited to:
  - 3.1. a consideration of child sexual abuse which took place at Angell Road, Monkton Street, Ivy House, South Vale, and Shirley Oaks Children’s Homes;
  - 3.2. the involvement of Michael Carroll in the sexual abuse of children in the care of the Council; his recruitment and continued employment by the Council; and the circumstances surrounding his application to foster a child and the Council’s subsequent account to the Clough Inquiry;
  - 3.3. Steven Forrest’s involvement in the sexual abuse of children; and his recruitment and continued employment by the Council;
  - 3.4. allegations that individuals with information about the sexual abuse of children in the care of the Council were the subject of intimidation and potentially lethal violence; and allegations that there was inappropriate interference in law enforcement investigations into the sexual abuse of children in the care of the Council.
- 4. In light of the investigations set out above, the Inquiry will publish a report setting out its findings, lessons learned, and recommendations to improve child protection and safeguarding in England and Wales.

For information on attending a preliminary hearing, please read the information page on [attending a hearing](#)

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