

Witness Statement – Derek Murphy

Brook House Inquiry – Annex A

Background

1. My name is Derek Murphy. I will not give my data of birth as it is already known to the Inquiry, and it is not within the Terms of Reference.
2. The Inquiry is aware of how long I worked at G4S. My career before or after that is not within the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry.
3. I worked at G4S as a DCO and for a very short period as a DCM. The Inquiry is already aware of the roles of a DCO and a DC. I worked there a very long time ago and I cannot recall exactly what I did.
4. I left G4S because the Home Office cancelled by Security Certification. My current employment is nothing to do with the Inquiry and is not within the Terms of Reference.

Application Process

5. I cannot recall what attracted me to work at Brook House as I applied to work there a very long time ago. It was most likely that I liked the job by the way it was advertised, had I known beforehand and what it was really like I would never applied for it.
6. It was over 4 years that I worked for G4S, and I cannot recall the recruitment process.

Culture

7. It was over 4 years ago that I worked at G4S, and I cannot recall any specific culture. It was an aggressive place Detainees and staff used bad language. Senior management never challenged this use of bad language, and everyone did it.
8. Staff morale was always low at Brook House. It was low before the relevant period and will always be low because of the working conditions. It is understaffed, overworked, aggressive and dangerous all the time.
9. I can't recall the attitudes towards detainees in detail as I worked at Brook House over 4 years ago. It was an aggressive place to work. No one can consistently be surrounded by aggression and

violence, often directed towards them, and be happy about it. I would say this applies more so to the staff who were used all the time for C&R whilst others did not get used at all. This was unfair.

10a. The concerns I had whilst working at Brook House were that the same staff were used for C&R, including myself. Other staff, including Owen Syred just simply did not want to get involved in C&R. This was unfair.

10b. As above (10a).

10c. I expressed at the time of working at Brook House that we had no mental health training. This did not help detainees with their mental health issues. All the staff could do was react to what a detainee did.

11. To my recollection I did not have any problems with senior management. I cannot comment on management values or priorities and the impact on staff because I never saw them on the wings that much.

12. To me recollection I cannot recall anyone raising concerns (staff or detainees) in relation to mistreatment of detainees.

Physical layout of Brook House

13. I do not understand the question. The set up of the building is not something I ever thought about, and no one ever complained about the setup of the building. The building is a detention centre, and it looks like every other detention centre in the UK to a degree.

14. I do not know what improvements need to be made to the setup of the building but what I do know is that if you gave detainees their own rooms, not shared rooms, this would help them. Also, give them keys to their rooms which would make it feel less like a prison for them.

15a. E Wing was for detainees who were violent or who were committing acts of self-harm.

15b. Detainees would be moved to E Wing if they were violent or were committing acts of self-harm or if you disobeyed the rules of the centre.

15c. Nothing happened on E Wing. It was the same as other wings, nothing special or extra although you could not mix with others until your behaviour improved.

15.d The only difference with E Wing was the at you could not freely leave the wing.

15e. Whether detainees could leave E Wing or not, was a decision for the senior managers.

Policies and procedures

16a. To my recollection, I would have followed the rules set out at the time. It was over 4 years ago that I worked at G4S, and I cannot recall.

16b. To my recollection, I would have followed the rules set out at the time. It was over 4 years ago that I worked at G4S, and I cannot recall.

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Training

17. I cannot recall the training as I worked for G4S over 4 years ago. I know there was training, and I would have done the training. I do not recall details or specific dates. I am sure the Inquiry can get details from G4S as they would have details. I do not.

18. I do not recall if the training prepared me for the role and I am sure I would have said something if I had reason to.

19. I do recall a yearly refresher of C&R but I do not recall details. I do not recall any other refresher courses.

20. I do not recall any training for activities officers. As far as I know, I think the training was the same for everyone.

21. I do not recall any personal protection course. I may well have attended one, but I do not recall it.

22. I do not recall having any issues with the delivery of the training.

23. I do recall use of force training, but I do not recall dates.

24. I do not recall any issues regarding the quality of the training.

The role of a DCO and the relationships with detained persons

25. The job description is not accurate regarding the role of DCO as it does inform people of the harsh, aggressive and violent environment. It does not describe that you would almost always work more than your 13.5 +hour shift. It does not describe that you may be used all the time for control and restraint. It does not describe that you will be dealing with men who will have serious mental health issues, and that you will have no mental health training. It does not describe that you will not always get your breaks.

Just recently (December 21 and January 22) both MITE and SERCO have advertised for such roles from Gatwick (on Indeed.com). The adverts have not changed at all. The fact that the Inquiry has been running since 14 December 2020, it is quite clear that the Home Office and Inquiry does not care about detainee welfare in the slightest, as this is something that could have been rectified quite easily. Has anyone checked the job adverts? The Inquiry are spending public money on asking questions to people who have not been in Brook House for almost 4 years, rather than employing someone to take control of these mistakes and simply rectify them. This is not rocket science. The job advert in 2009 was not accurate. The job advert is still not accurate in 2022.

26. Language was often a barrier to working with detainees as they did not speak English. Access to interpreters was not easy. I mostly used other detainees to translate.

27. I do not recall any incentives to encourage positive behaving, but this would have been a good idea and would have encouraged positive behaviour.

28. I do not recall the role of a DCO during the ACDT process. I do recall having to put entries into an ACDT when I was covering constant obs.

29. My understanding of the process for preventing drugs coming into Brook House was staff searches at the gate, but this did not happen very often. I do not recall much else as it was a long time ago that I worked there. Drugs was a huge problem at Brook House, so the process was not working.

30a. I did not ever work as one of the welfare team.

30b. I did not ever work as one of the welfare team.

30c. I did not ever work as one of the welfare team.

30d. I did not ever work as one of the welfare team.

31a. I did not work as party of the security team, and I cannot answer this question.

Relationships with staff

32. I do not recall any racist attitudes or behaviour by staff. If I did experience such behaviour, I would have reported it to senior management.

33. I do not recall any homophobic or misogynistic behavior.

34. I was not aware of any staff bringing drugs into Brook House.

35. I did not experience any bullying at Brook House, and no one ever mentioned it.

36. I did not have any concerns about other staff being bullied as no one ever mentioned anything about bullying.

37. It was over 4 years ago, and I do not recall a relationship with Home Office staff. I do recall that they would visit E Wing in the morning for a short period of time to check paperwork.

Relationship with senior managers

38. I had a working relationship with senior managers. I worked on the wings and did not see senior managers that much. If I had a problem, I would have raised it with them if needed.

39. As far as I can recall I did not have a problem with the quality of leadership by senior managers. We just got on with the job.

Relationships with DCM's

40. I do not recall appraisals or the working relationship with my manager. If I had a problem, I would have said it at the time.

41. The DCMs did the best they could, it was hard busy, aggressive environment. DCM's problems were the same as DCO's problems; overworked, no breaks, no support and understaffed.

Relationships with other DCO's

42. It was a long time ago and I do not recall detail of working with other DCO's. I remember getting along with everyone and not having any concerns. If I did, I would have reported them; just as I did when I reported about the same staff being used for C&R all the time.

Relationships with healthcare staff

43a. I do not recall details of working with healthcare staff as it was a long time ago. I do not recall any problems. If detainees needed a nurse, I would call for one and they would come and do their job.

43b. I do not recall details of working with healthcare staff as it was a long time ago. I do not recall any problems. If detainees needed a nurse, I would call for one and they would come and do their job.

43c. I do not recall details of working with healthcare staff as it was a long time ago. I do not recall any problems. If detainees needed a nurse, I would call for one and they would come and do their job.

43d. I do not recall details of working with healthcare staff as it was a long time ago. I do not recall any problems. If detainees needed a nurse, I would call for one and they would come and do their job.

Disciplinary and grievance processes

44a. I do not recall being involved in any disciplinary investigations as it was over 4 years ago. If you would like me to comment on any investigations, you would need to send me any reports that were made at the time. I could then read them and make a comment.

44b. I do not recall being involved in any disciplinary investigations as it was over 4 years ago. If you would like me to comment on any investigations, you would need to send me any reports that were made at the time. I could then read them and make a comment.

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44e. I do not recall being involved in any disciplinary investigations as it was over 4 years ago. If you would like me to comment on any investigations, you would need to send me any reports that were made at the time. I could then read them and make a comment.

44f. I do not recall being involved in any disciplinary investigations as it was over 4 years ago. If you would like me to comment on any investigations, you would need to send me any reports that were made at the time. I could then read them and make a comment.

44g. I do not recall being involved in any disciplinary investigations as it was over 4 years ago. If you would like me to comment on any investigations, you would need to send me any reports that were made at the time. I could then read them and make a comment.

45a. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

45b. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

45c. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

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45e. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

45f. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

45g. I do not recall being involved in any grievance investigations. It was a long time ago, but I do not recall any grievance investigations that I was involved in.

Staffing levels

46. I do not recall details around staff shortages, but I do recall staff shortages was normal. We just got on with it as there was nothing any of us could do about it.

47. Obviously there was an impact of staffing shortages. Morale was low, especially for those of us who were used for C&R all the time.

48. I have no idea about the staffing levels of the healthcare team.

49. I do not recall what the staffing levels of the activities team was. Activities staff never worked on the wings anyway and they did not want to from what I recall.

50. I do not recall any problems with Tinsley House staff. As far as I can recall, they did not get specific training. As far as I can remember staff were all trained the same.

Treatment of detained persons

51. I did not work in reception at any time and cannot answer this question.

52. I do not recall the induction policy and I do not recall if the induction process was followed during the relevant period.

53. I do not recall the activities program; I did not work on activities. From what I can recall from the centre in general, detainees were often bored and had nothing to do.

54. I am not an activities expert, but the best thing to do is to provide activities the detainees want. So, why not carry out a survey to see what they would like. Not, what they are forced to like. Make

the detainees part of the decision process about things that impact on their lives while they are housed in the centre. That would make detainees feel part of the centre, not enforced by it.

55. I do not recall as it was over 4 years ago, but I do not believe I had anything to do with the Rule 35 process.

56. I do not recall how detainees were reviewed or how they got seen under the Rule 35 process as it was over 4 years ago

Use of force

57. I was involved in many uses of forces during the relevant period, and my entire time at Brook House. I was probably used every day for use of force. Obviously, I cannot comment on all of them, and it was such a long time ago recalling details is a problem. I do not recall reviews of the incidents and do not recall lessons learned. I do not believe lessons learned ever happened. This term is new to me. If it was part of the procedures, I do not recall experiencing it.

58. I do not recall having any concerns about any incidents at Brook House. If I had concerns, I would have raised them at the time. I did raise the fact that I was used for C&R all the time. It was always the same staff as others would not do it.

59. My opinion of control and restraint techniques is, when used properly they are very effective and safe to control an individual's behaviour. I do not feel that C&R was used excessively at Brook House. It was that aggressive, that it had to be used daily. Detainees would fight, self-harm and refuse instructions every day.

60. I did not see any alternatives to C&R techniques used at Brook House. The only way to avoid using force of detainees is to allow them to have what they want. Ninety nine percent of the time that use of force is used is because detainees are refusing to follow the rules of the centre or fighting each other. So simply changing the rules would be a solution. Ask the detainees what they think, have work groups to discuss and come up with new rules. After all, it is they who must live in the centre. Why not make them part of the decision process? This would stop the need for use of force.

Individual welfare

61. I did not receive any mental health training whilst working at Brook House.

62. I do not recall details of managing the mental health of detainees. I am not mentally health trained and I just go ton with the job as best as I could with the training that I had received.

63. I do not recall managing the mental health of detained persons with the healthcare team. It was over 4 years ago that I worked at Brook House.

64. I do not recall details as it was over 4 years ago but there was a problem with drugs entering Brook House. It obviously caused staff massive problems with aggressive behaviour and the welfare of detainees.

65. I do not recall any drug rehabilitation support at Brook House. I did not know it existed.

66. The Role of Chaplaincy was helping the detainees with religious matter or concerns. I think they are very good and helpful. I do not recall Chaplaincy raising any issues with me about detainee welfare.

67. I do not recall details of the process of what happened what a detainee self-harmed,. Other than if they did they would be put on a constant supervision on E wing. I do not think it was effective as it did not stop, self harm was a daily occurrence. I cannot say what alternatives would be effective as I am not a Doctor, I am not a Psychiatrist and I am not mental health trained either.

68. I do not recall the process of what happened when a detainee refused food other than they would be monitored in some way. It was over 4 years that I worked at Brook House.

Detained persons as Time Served Foreign National Offenders (TSFNO's)

69. I did not work on reception, so I do not know about the process of reception.

70. My experience of TSFNO's is that they were treated the same. It was over 4 years ago that I worked at Brook House so I do not recall much detail.

71. I do not recall if co location of TSFNO's was a problem as I worked at Brook House over 4 years ago.

Abuse of individuals detained at Brook House

72. I do not recall any specific concerns about persons detained at Brook House. Bad language was used by staff and detainees. This was commonplace and was never challenged. I was at Brook House for a short period of time. The environment was like that when I joined. I did not report this as it was normal and an everything that was just accepted as normal life in the centre, by detainees and staff.

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Complaints

74a. Detainees could complain about anything there were unhappy with. They could tell any member of staff, fill out a complaint form, tell Chaplaincy, Activity Staff, Welfare staff and call the police.

74b. Staff could complain to managers, senior manager or other members of staff.

75a. I do not recall receiving any complaints and referring them to any investigation.

75b. I do not recall any complaints made against me or another member of staff. I was contacted by the PSU by telephone about numerous C&R's that occurred. This was normal as I was always used for C&R's. At no time do I recall any outcomes, lessons learned or anything of that nature. Surely if there was a problem or issue, I should have been told and stopped from carrying out C&R. If anything, I was used more and more which I did complain about.

76. My opinion on how to improve the process is; a start would be, to ensure staff actually know about it, to take action of the complaint and do something about it.

77. I do not know of any other process for detainees to make complaints other than to fill out a complaint form or tell someone.

The Panorama programme

78. I did work with Callum Tulley but not directly. He would come on my wing whenever he wanted. I do not recall dates or times.

79. I did appear on the programme briefly. I do not know the timings of my appearance. I cannot watch the programme again as it affects my mental health.

80. I was not at Brook House after the programme was aired and cannot comment on staff morale as a result of the programme.

81. I was not at Brook House after the programme and cannot comment on the impact of the programme on detainees.

82. I do not recall any detainee being underage or saying so. I do not recall what the process would be if that is the case.

83. I was not at Brook House following the programme so cannot comment if changes were made or if they were successful or not.

Specific individuals

84a to 84t. See below.

i. Regarding the list of names, I almost certainly worked with those individuals. I cannot say when I worked with them or what my relationship was. I worked at Brook House over 4 years ago and I cannot recall. If I had a problem with anyone, I would have reported it at the time.

ii. I do not recall anyone being offensive or making insensitive remarks about detained persons. If you are referring to bad language, as I have stated previously this was commonplace amongst staff and detainees.

iii. I do not recall witnessing any incidents of direct verbal abuse to detainees, bad language was commonplace and distasteful things were said amongst staff. That was the environment at the time. This was never challenged; it was the norm and used by all.

iv. I did not see any physical abuse at Brook House and if I did, I would have reported it. The programme does not actually show any physical abuse and that is because it never happened.

Suggestions for improvements

85. Brook House could be improved by having more staff, not using the same staff for use of force, and giving staff their breaks. Detainees with mental health issues should not be in detention as it is not suitable for their needs and makes them worse. Detainees should be allowed to be part of the decision-making process that affects their life within the centre. They should be allowed to sit in with senior managers on meetings to input on decisions that affect life at Brook House.

Any other concerns

86. Everything has been covered in the above.

87. The Inquiry should ask all the staff who worked at Brook House and more importantly, those who are working there now.

88. I can not think of anything else relevant to the Inquiry's work.

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed: Derek Murphy

Date: 21/01/22