

## **Brook House Inquiry**

### **First Witness Statement of David Webb**

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021.

I, David Webb, will say as follows:

#### **Introduction**

1. My name is David Andrew Webb, date of birth DPA
2. My career started in 1984 as an apprentice mechanic. Upon completion of training I gained the following qualification: City and Guilds in Engine and Chassis technology, Social Skills and Road Traffic Industries Training Board (RTITB) qualification. I worked for several different companies within the haulage industry over the following 29 years. My roles included HGV vehicle technician and driver.
3. In 2014 I started work for G4S as a DCO based at Brook House. During my time with G4S I also qualified as a Use of Force instructor.
4. I left employment with G4S in 2018 following a training dispute which I chose not to pursue. The training dispute was following a complaint about use of inappropriate language during scenarios. The evidence presented showed that the allegation had been jointly sent by 3 individuals who had attended training. Witness statements were not gathered from all individuals who had attended the training but the 2 additional statements that were taken were contradictory to the initial complaint. I attended a disciplinary interview; during the meeting I felt that a decision had already been reached by G4S prior to evaluating any evidence. As a result, and after some consideration I decided that I would not appeal as I had lost faith in the disciplinary process. For example, the allocated point of contact I was given during this process was not available as they were attending a course.

My current employment is as a vehicle technician in a commercial garage.

#### **Application Process**

5. I was attracted to working as a DCO as I was looking for a change of career following 29 years of work within the motor industry. After speaking to a family member who worked for G4S I decided to apply for the role.
6. Following successful initial interview processes I began an 8 week induction course. In my opinion the recruitment process provided a general understanding of the role of a DCO.

## **Culture**

7. During my time working at Brook House I predominantly worked within E Wing. I would describe the culture within this wing to be collaborative; forming close relationships with the other colleagues on my shift. The culture of trust, flexibility and teamwork were of paramount importance. As E Wing was effectively a closed unit within Brook House I can only comment on the culture within this wing as I have limited experience of working in other areas of Brook House.
8. In the months leading up and including the Relevant Period I was completing my training as a Use of Force Instructor which meant I was not working within the main building or on the Wings and therefore am unable to comment on staff morale during this period. However, during the time immediately prior to the Relevant Period and during the Relevant Period I was aware of significant staff changes due to new staff being appointed as DCOs.
9. When working within E Wing I would describe the attitudes towards individuals detained to be caring and understanding of their situation. Time was spent trying to understand their individual needs and support them where possible, During the Relevant Period my time spent on E Wing was limited due to completion of training outside of the Wings.
10. I do not have any particular concerns relating to how the values of G4S or its culture impacted on those detained at Brook House. Within E Wing, where I worked, all individuals had access to healthcare, visits, immigration advice, Chaplaincy and the Independent Monitoring Board also made regular visits. DCMs that I had dealings with were always responsive to any requests that we made.
11. My experience of the management and leadership culture at Brook House was one of visibility. Within E Wing both DCMs and the Senior Management team would make daily visits to the wing. In my experience, I found contact with management was positive and the individual leaders that I had contact with were supportive. For

example following urgent queries made in relation to detainees, I always found the response from senior leaders to be prompt and that they would provide a check in with E-Wing staff at a later time.

12. During my time as a DCO I was not aware of any occasion where someone raised concerns about the treatment of detained persons.

### **Physical Layout of Brook House**

13. The setup of Brook House allowed open access for detainees during the day. This included access to the shop, open air courtyards, chapel / prayer rooms, gym and education. Within each wing detainees had access to pool tables and table tennis. In my opinion this setup worked well for detainees. I worked predominantly on E Wing which was a closed wing used for detainees who were vulnerable. The set up within this wing was more structured and catered more towards the individuals needs. The atmosphere within E Wing was much quieter than the rest of the centre due to its smaller size, only 13 rooms.
14. When I first started work at Brook House the detainees shared a room with one other person. Over time this increased to 3 individuals sharing a room. I am unable to recall the exact time when the increase to 3 individuals sharing a room was made but I believe it was prior to the relevant period. In my opinion, this led to an increased population within the centre all sharing the same amount of space and facilities, leading to a busier and noisier centre. My experience of working within E Wing, which was smaller, never went to 3 individuals in a room and was all on one level led to a more caring personable experience for the detainees. In my opinion, this improved the care and 1-1 interaction that DCOs were able to have with the detainees.
15. My understanding of the purpose of E Wing was to provide a safe environment to care for vulnerable detainees. Their vulnerabilities could include health concerns, mental health concerns including detainees who were suicidal and required a greater level of care. Detainees were moved to E Wing if there was a requirement for close monitoring. Whilst on E Wing detainees were closely monitored by DCOs, individuals were visited by a DCM who conducted a daily review also taking on board the views of the individual. The care and attention that detainees received on E Wing as opposed to the other wings was a smaller unit with fewer people, a quieter atmosphere, and greater ratio of staff to detainee. For a detainee to be moved from E



Wing evidence from all departments involved in the care of the individual would be discussed with the detainee and a decision would be reached based on this review.

### **Policies and Procedures**

16. All core values and policies were referred to throughout the training and induction process. Once I was working on the Wings there was an emphasis on following Daily practices and procedures which were recorded in the daily diary. DCMs and other senior leaders made regular checks. Changes to policy was discussed as part of the daily briefings conducted by DCMs or Senior Management Team prior to the start for every shift.

### **Training**

17. I attended the initial 8 week training course for DCOs in March 2013.
18. My opinion is that the initial training gave me a good basic overview of the day to day roles and responsibilities of a DCO. The use of scenarios was helpful although could not recreate nor cover all eventualities. The period when I shadowed a colleague on the wing was the most useful part of the training.
19. Refresher courses were mandatory for Use of Force (annually) and First aid (Bi-annually).
20. I am unable to comment on the training offered or completed by activities officers as I never worked within this role.
21. Personal protection training formed part of your initial induction and a refresher course completed every year.
22. The content of the course was both informative and relevant and was based on practical skills.
23. I completed Use of Force training when I joined G4S as part of the initial induction process in March 2013. I subsequently completed an annual refresher course.
24. In my opinion the quality of the Use of Force training was good. The content was relevant, informative and explained well by trainers.

### **The Role of a DCO and relationships with detained persons**

25. Document **CJS004294**, job description of a DCO dated 2009 outlines the main roles and responsibilities that I undertook whilst employed at Brook House by G4S.



26. My individual approach to engaging with detainees was to make detainees feel comfortable and ensure they understood the routines of the centre. The main barrier faced in engaging with detainees was language. To overcome this I would use other colleagues who potentially spoke their language, ask the Iman to support or use language line to provide an interpreter. As DCOs we had free access to Language Line.
27. Positive behaviour was encouraged and detainees could apply for paid work within the centre as a reward for good behaviour.
28. During the ACDT process the role of a DCO was to complete observations on the detainee in line with the ACDT document. These observations would be recorded in the ACDT document and a DCO may also be present at reviews carried out by Senior Management Team and other relevant departments. In my opinion the procedure and practice was adequate as in my experience each ACDT that I was involved in was subject to changes in line with observations made.
29. There were processes in place to prevent drugs from entering the centre. Detainees and any visitors were searched prior to entering the centre, Random searches were conducted on staff prior to starting their shift. My experience of working at Brook House was that this process was not successful at preventing all drugs from entering the centre. The introduction of "Spice" as a recreational drug and its difficulty in detection had an adverse effect to the amount of drugs entering the centre. Any person caught bringing drugs into the centre was immediately referred to the Police. In addition, staff members would be subject to immediate disciplinary action.
30. I did not work as part of the welfare team.
31. I did not work as part of the security team.

#### **Relationships with staff**

32. During my time working as a DCO I was not aware nor did I experience any racist attitudes or behaviours amongst the staff that I worked with.
33. During my time working as a DCO I was not aware nor did I experience any homophobic and or misogynistic attitudes or behaviours amongst the staff that I worked with.
34. During my time working as a DCO I was not aware of any staff member bringing drugs into Brook House.

35. During my time working as a DCO I did not experience bullying by other staff members at Brook House.
36. During my time working as a DCO I did not have concerns about other staff being bullied or had to deal with any complaint regarding bullying.
37. Within my role as DCO I had limited contact with Immigration staff, this was limited to when they visited detainees on the wing or as part of ACDT reviews. I am unable to comment on how they balanced immigration removal and individual welfare as DCOs would not be present when discussing the individual detainees case as meetings were generally held in the immigration offices within the centre.
38. My relationship with senior managers at Brook House was good. Senior leaders were visible and would make daily visits to the wing. In my experience, I found contact with management was positive and individual leaders that I had contact with were supportive and available to support with urgent queries. For example following urgent queries made in relation to detainees, I always found the response from senior leaders to be prompt and that they would provide a check in with E-Wing staff at a later time.
39. In my opinion, from the limited interaction I personally had with Senior Managers, the quality of leadership at Brook House was consistent. For example, at daily briefings Senior Managers gave consistent messages and were supportive towards staff. In my opinion this was also true of Senior Managers during the Relevant Period.
40. Due to the nature of working shifts I worked with a range of DCMs, this could change frequently dependent on shift patterns. DCMs who I worked most frequently with were Ella Francis, Steve Loughton and Nick London. My experience of being managed at Brook House included daily briefings by a DCM, appraisals were conducted annually and I was provided with regular feedback related to performance management.
41. In my opinion the management by DCMs at Brook House that I had contact with was good.
42. As I worked predominantly within E Wing I worked closely with a small number of DCOs. My experience of working with them was good and I felt able to rely on them to support me in my role.
43. As I worked predominantly within E Wing members of the healthcare team would visit detainees on the wing daily to administer medication or complete any observations that were required. My experience of working with the healthcare team was that they were caring and supportive of individuals. Communication with the



healthcare team was good, they were always at the end of the phone to support when needed. In my experience a member of the healthcare team would attend any Use of Force incident.

- 44. I was suspended in August 2017 prior to the Panorama programme being aired to enable an internal investigation to be completed. I attended a fact finding interview following the programme being aired. I was called back to be further interviewed. The outcome of the investigation was I was reinstated as a DCO.
- 45. I did not have any involvement in any grievance investigations.

### **Staffing Levels**

- 46. Within E wing where I worked there were always at least 2 DCOs on duty during the day. In my experience during the time I was working E wing did not suffer from any staff shortages and therefore activities and services for detainees were not affected.
- 47. I am unable to comment on how staff shortages affected staff morale as in my experience on E Wing we always had at least 2 DCOs on duty during the day.
- 48. In my experience staffing levels within the healthcare team were adequate. Detainees were able to access the healthcare team when required.
- 49. In my experience of working on E Wing a member of the activities team would come daily to E Wing and take detainees to the gym at the detainee's request.
- 50. Tinsley House staff would occasionally be seconded to E Wing to support ACDT. In my experience I found the staff to be flexible in their approach to supporting E Wing staff and the care of detainees.

### **Treatment of Detained Persons**

- 51. I did not work on reception during my time at Brook House.
- 52. In my experience the induction policy was followed. I am unable to comment if the policy was followed during the Relevant Period as I was not working continuously on the wings.
- 53. The number of activities provided for individuals on E Wing were in my opinion sufficient to keep detainees engaged.
- 54. In my opinion the activities provided on E Wing covered a good range of interests. For example detainees had access to computers, pool table, access to education provided by a teacher, televisions in their room and communal area, access to a gym and outside area where detainees had access to football and basketball.



55. My involvement as a DCO in any Rule 35 process was limited to fulfilling any ACDT observations as required.
56. In my experience of working on E Wing with daily visits from the GP reviews of individual detainees under Rule 35 processes happened swiftly. In my experience, I am not aware of any detained persons being refused appointments.
57. Immediately before the Relevant Period I was involved with a number of planned Use of Force incidents but the outcome did not always result in a Use of Force. DCMs would select staff for planned Use of Force and all incidents were filmed and reviewed following the event if force was used. During the Relevant Period I was not working regularly on the wings due to training. However, to the best of my knowledge I recall being requested by management to support in a planned Use of Force incident. This involved myself, Callum Tulley and Yan Paschali. During the incident the detainee was spoken to at the door. He refused to move out of the room. The Oscar 1 in charge of the intervention instructed us to enter the room which we did. The detainee was escorted from the room using minimal use of force. The incident was reviewed after the incident by a manager. I don't recall that there was any changes made to practice following this incident.
58. I did not have any concerns relating to incidents that I was not directly involved in as I would not have been aware of the circumstances of any incident.
59. In my opinion I do not believe that use of control and restraint techniques were used excessively in Brook House.
60. Use of control and restraint techniques were used as a final resort. In my experience of being involved with incidents, many more were resolved through the use of dialogue that were resolved through the use of control and restraint.
61. I did not receive any specific training in relation to the welfare of those detained at Brook House, specifically in relation to individual's mental health.
62. The management of detainees mental health and well-being came down to knowing them as individuals. Through contact with the individual you got to know their individual interests and would then tailor activities to meet this. For example if they had an interest in art then we would then provide the detainee with art materials. Through keeping the detainees day full it kept the individual engaged and as such reduced the number of incidents.
63. In my experience of working on E Wing detainees who were in need of support from the healthcare team in managing their mental health and well-being were well

supported. They had daily visits from members of the healthcare team and the healthcare team could be called on for additional support if required.

64. Drugs were used by individuals within Brook House. Policies to prevent drugs entering the centre were successful to a point but did not eliminate the problem completely, Drug use within E Wing where I predominantly worked was less than in other areas of the centre due to E Wing being a closed wing therefore limiting the interactions of individual detainees. In my opinion the use of drugs by individuals did have an adverse effect on their behaviour and on their health. Detainees behaviour became more erratic and harder to predict.
65. Drug rehabilitation and support was offered by the healthcare team in Brook House. In my experience this was effective in some cases but was dependent on the individual detainee.
66. My understanding of the Chaplaincy team was to provide detainees with access religious support and guidance. During my time working at Brook House no concerns regarding the welfare of individuals was raised with myself by any member of the Chaplaincy team.
67. If an individual self-harmed or suggested that they wished to self-harm an ACDT would be opened. The individual would be spoken to by a manager and observations would be planned and the individual would be monitored by staff in line with the ACDT. In my opinion it was effective in monitoring their welfare.
68. If an individual refused to eat the food provided by the centre every effort would be made to provide alternatives including getting items from the shop or requesting alternative meals from the kitchen. In my experience on E Wing individuals would be closely monitored and if they had refused to eat then this would be referred to the managers and members of the healthcare team. If required an ACDT would be put in place and if necessary detainees would be taken to hospital. In my opinion it was effective in monitoring the individual's welfare.
69. I did not work on reception for TSFNO individuals,
70. TSFNOS detained at Brook House in my opinion were treated the same as other detainees.
71. In my experience of managing the welfare of TSFNOS and other detainees the co-location had limited impact upon behaviour. In my opinion within E Wing there were few issues between TSFNOS and other detainees.



72. During my time working at Brook House I did not have any specific concerns about the abuse of detained persons by staff.
73. During my time working at Brook House within E Wing I did not have any concerns about the abuse of detained persons by other detainees other than minor disagreements over TV channels which were resolved through dialogue.
74. Staff could raise a complaint with a line manager which could be escalated if necessary. All staff were aware of the whistleblowing policy and there was also an anonymous phonenumber that you could call. Detainees were able to raise a complaint with any member of staff and there were complaints forms that detainees could complete that could be posted into locked post-boxes within the wing for Immigration or the Independent Monitoring Board. My understanding of the process for internal investigations was that staff members were suspended pending investigation. Fact finding interviews were conducted by a manager from an independent location. Following the fact finding interview it may be referred to the Professional Standards Unit if necessary and from there decisions about any disciplinary action would be decided.
75. During my time working for Brook House I did not receive any complaint from a detainee or other staff member that I had to refer on for investigation. I was involved in the investigation conducted by G4S following the Panorama programme. In my opinion the investigation followed the complaints process. I was suspended in August 2017 prior to the Panorama programme being aired to enable an internal investigation to be completed. I attended a fact finding interview following the programme being aired. I was called back to be further interviewed. The outcome of the investigation was I was reinstated as a DCO.
76. In my opinion the process could be improved by shortening the length of time taken to investigate as this left individuals in limbo dealing with a stressful situation with little communication from HR.
77. The process for detainees to make complaints about other matters followed a similar procedure. A complaint form could be completed and this was referred to the relevant department.

### **The Panorama Programme**

78. I can confirm that I worked with Callum Tulley. He was an activities officer and would come to E Wing to collect detainees to take to the gym as part of their activities



programme. My interactions with him were limited as he did not work on E Wing. I also worked alongside him in a use of force incident as we were both selected to take part in a planned intervention by the DCM.

79. I can confirm that I do appear in the programme. The timing of the footage in which I appear is 31mins 57sec to 33mins 50sec. When I first appear on the programme I am stood holding a shield.
80. In my opinion the impact of the Panorama programme had a negative impact on staff morale however as I was suspended at the time of airing I was unable to contact any member of staff and as such my opinion is only based on my own thoughts.
81. As I was suspended when the programme was aired I am unaware of the impact that the programme had on those detained at Brook House.
82. The process for dealing with a detainee claiming to be underage for detention the individual would initially be moved to E Wing and management and healthcare would then intervene and conduct the relevant investigations. The detainee would be removed from the centre into the care of social services if necessary.
83. When I returned to work at Brook House following the Panorama programme I did not return to work on the wings as I was working within training as a Use of Force Instructor. As such I am unable to comment on changes within the centre.

### **Specific Individuals**

84. I can confirm that I did not work with the following individuals; Calvin Sanders, Clayton Fraser, Aaron Stokes, Mark Earl, Slim Bassoud, Sean Sayers, Ryan Bromley, Daniel Small, Daniel Lake, Babtatunde Fagbo, Shane Munro and Nurse Jo Buss. Nathan Ring was a DCM at Brook House who worked on the opposite shift to myself and would have had limited contact with him on cross-over days in his position as a manager. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.
- Steve Webb was a DCM and a Use of Force Instructor. I worked closely with him whilst completing my training as a Use of Force Instructor. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.

Chris Donnelly was a DCM on my shift pattern and who I worked with regularly as part of their role in visiting E Wing. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.

Derek Murphy was a DCO who I worked alongside on E Wing prior to me starting training as a Use of Force instructor and prior to the Relevant Period. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.

John Connolly was a DCO based at Tinsley House and a Use of Force Instructor. I worked with him whilst training as a Use of Force Instructor but did not experience working with him with detainees. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.

Charles Frances was a DCO on E Wing on the opposite shift pattern to myself. My contact with him was limited to work on cross over days. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. I did not witness him using any derogatory, offensive or insensitive remarks about detained persons. I did not witness any incidents of verbal abuse or physical abuse.

Yan Paschali was a DCO at Brook House. I worked with Yan on E Wing although he was the opposite shift to myself and therefore contact with him was limited to cross over days and when he was assigned to E Wing. In my experience of working with him I did not have any concerns about his personal views or behaviours. However, after watching the Panorama programme when it aired I was shocked at his behaviour and views expressed about detainees as I had never witnessed this behaviour from him before.

### **Suggestions for Improvements**

85. In my opinion the increase of staff numbers on each wing would have the biggest impact on improving individual health, safety and welfare within Brook House for both detainees and staff.

<b>Statement of Truth</b>	
<p>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.</p> <p>I am content for this witness statement to form part of the evidence before the Brook House Inquiry and to be published on the Inquiry's website.</p>	
Name	David Webb
Signature	<b>Signature</b>
Date	02/08/2021