

BROOK HOUSE INQUIRY

First Witness Statement of Darren Tomsett

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 5 July 2021, and supplemental requests under Rule 9 dated 13 October 2021 and 16 December 2021.

I, Darren Tomsett, will say as follows:

Background

1. My name is Darren Tomsett. My year of birth is DPA
2. I started work for G4S at Brook House IRC on 26 January 2015, and I worked there until 7 January 2018. I was a Detainee Custody Officer (“DCO”) until August 2017, when I was temporarily seconded to the role of Detainee Custody Manager (“DCM”). I worked at Brook House throughout the Inquiry’s ‘relevant period’ from 1 April to 31 August 2017.
3. Before joining G4S, I worked for a plumbing and drainage company.
4. I was attracted to the sound of the DCO role because I wanted to work with people and the role sounded interesting. A copy of the DCO job advert is attached [INN000015]. It describes the DCO role as being vigilant, versatile, and non-judgmental, having the ability to listen to others and treat people with consideration and respect. It said that candidates for the role would find a ‘secure, friendly and professional working environment’. I enjoyed it when I first started, and I thought that I would work for G4S until I retired.

5. I enjoyed being in an environment with people around. I could chat with the detainees, talk about football, play pool with them, and interact. I enjoyed having chats with the detainees when I was on the wing. I liked to see them and hear how they were getting on. I would try to build a working relationship and take the time to talk to people. I used to give detainees cigarettes if they didn't have any or just because they needed one, which helped in tense situations. The days were busy and long.
6. I started work on A wing (which was formerly the induction wing). The induction wing was moved to B wing in approximately April 2016, and I was one of the first officers to work on the new induction wing and help get the unit ready for residents. I helped organise and check that the rooms were fully equipped, and the wing office and admin side of things were ready to go. We had a good team and a positive feeling amongst us. There was a lot to do during the working day, concentrating on induction with the new detainees coming in, other detainees moving to other wings, and the running of the wing in general.
7. It was important to do a good job. I followed the centre rules in dealing with detainees. There were some really good staff, who were doing their best, but some officers were not as proactive.
8. As a DCO I would take the bins out, clean up, get food trolleys ready, check the servery, check that all the pool balls were there, and do other duties. Having a missing pool ball, for example, would upset detainees who wanted to play, and it also raised safety concerns, like why was a pool ball missing? My role was to help detainees, to show them how the centre worked, to give them their induction and show them around. I enjoyed that and I encouraged them to get on with their immigration cases. Personally, I did not think that any of them deserved to be there. Brook House was like a category B prison, not a detention centre such as Tinsley House.

9. I tried to help detainees where I could. When they asked me for something and it was something I could help with as a DCO, or as a Detainee Custody Manager (“DCM”) when I took on that role in August 2017, I would oblige.
10. There was an intimidating and aggressive atmosphere at Brook House. Often, when detainees were not allowed to get what they wanted, they would get aggressive, such as when detainees tried to get on wings where they were not resident, which was not allowed. Detainees knew that it was not allowed. There was always a confrontation because you were not letting them do what they wanted. I would tell them that if they needed to see a friend on the wing, they could arrange to meet each other outside the wing, but there were often other reasons why they wanted to get on to the wing (e.g., drugs). Confrontation could happen at any time, for example, people refusing to go into their rooms at roll count, not wanting to move from one wing to another, not getting what they wanted immediately when they wanted it (e.g., a razor), or generally not wanting to be there. Detainees could get angry and aggressive and start threatening staff or other detainees. There were a lot of volatile and aggressive situations during my time there.
11. By way of illustration, one incident within the first few months of my joining Brook House, involved a detainee viewing pornographic content while I was on duty in the IT suite. I told him to stop and leave the room, and when he did not comply, I locked off his PC. The detainee smashed the PC and upturned a table. He became threatening and abusive towards me and told me ‘I was going to get it’ and ‘I’m going to fuck you up’. I held my arm out and told the detainee to back off. Other detained people got involved and moved between me and the detainee to try to diffuse the situation, trying to encourage him to leave. A DCM and a DCO arrived, and he was escorted away from the IT suite. A copy of the incident report is attached [INN000016].
12. From the beginning there were issues amongst the detainees, which could have been for a number of reasons, such as drugs, cultural issues, or just not getting on with

each other. Different things could cause arguments, like pushing into a queue at lunch, body odour, or a boiled egg.

13. As an officer on the wing, it was my responsibility to deal with problems and sort things out when they went wrong. If a detainee was causing trouble on the wing, and another detainee asked me to come to take a look, I would go and try to deescalate the situation, to find out what the issue was and hopefully find a solution (like suggest they call their solicitor, or email the Home Office, or put in a request to speak to the Home Office immigration team). Sometimes the person was just upset, and by talking to them and trying to understand their problem or give them an answer, I could find a way to bring the situation back down. Sometimes it may not have been just one person causing a problem, and I could be surrounded by half a dozen people with another 20 or so detainees looking on. Situations could become volatile so quickly. A big issue was that immigration cases were not being dealt with quickly enough, and it seemed that some people were in Brook House for longer than was necessary.
14. A lot of the detainees' behaviour was probably out of anger and frustration. The majority of people on the wing were no trouble, but a percentage were more troublesome and difficult to deal with. They would cause problems and were willing to confront staff. I tried to deescalate a situation or ask what I could do to solve the problem or help a detainee to calm down. Sometimes detainees were not prepared to listen. I tried to maintain boundaries and control and to stand my ground. There were detainees who may have been worried in that environment, and staff needed to show they were willing to stand up to behaviour that was wrong. I wanted detainees to feel that there was an officer they could go to.
15. I received verbal abuse from different detainees and also suffered threats, intimidation, and violence. From a personal point of view, it became a very difficult place to work, having to stand my ground and deal with these situations. I remember one incident when a detainee was shouting and screaming abuse and threatening to pour hot water and sugar over me. I can't remember the reasons behind it. I stayed

out of the way, but I could not leave my wing, as I think there was only two or three of us on the wing at the time. I did not take his kettle, because then he would have no way to make a hot drink and he could make a complaint. A first response wasn't needed. I waited for the situation to deescalate itself and, later on, he had calmed down and we spoke and moved on from it, with no further issues.

16. There were verbal threats to mine and my family's lives, that detainees would find out where I lived, or they would get people on the outside to find me. This was possible, as staff cars were visible from C wing. Sometimes I would submit an incident report or SIR (security information report), but I was threatened and verbally abused almost every day, and it was not possible to make a report every time. Often a detainee would come to me later in the day and apologise for their behaviour. I saw the frustration on their part and would accept an apology. I did not want to cause issues by raising a report if the situation was dealt with.
17. An example of this kind of incident is shown in the SIR from 20 January 2016 [INN000017]. I called a detainee on the intercom to tell him to pack his things because he was being moved from the induction wing (which was A wing at the time). The detainee started shouting at me and I told him to come to the office so that I could explain. The detainee was very aggressive, very threatening and he was swearing at me. He called me a 'fucking pussy' and a 'dickhead'. He made accusations that I was doing it on purpose. I called control because of the detainee's manner, and Oscar 1, DCM Dave Roffey, attended the wing and spoke to the detainee. A short time later, the detainee came back to the office to apologise to me for his behaviour, saying that he had anger problems and he woke up on the wrong side of the bed.
18. Some detainees would say things just to get a response, or they would threaten self-harm just to get what they wanted. These were difficult situations, and I would try to deescalate them. You could sometimes tell by their mannerisms the detainees who were genuinely struggling and at risk of self-harm. As a DCO, I was regularly

making risk assessments of detainees and deciding whether they would need to go on an ACDT (Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork).

19. There were drugs in the centre. They could have been coming in via visits, post, detainees coming in from other centres, with staff or other means that I'm not aware of. You could smell drugs on the wing and in rooms, and you would see that people were behaving out of character. Drug use led to issues on the wings or in the centre, and we had a number of medical issues because of drug related incidents. I recall one incident when I was responding to a first response, and a detainee was having an episode in the courtyard. An ambulance was called, and he was taken to hospital. He was okay afterwards and came back to the centre.
20. The main drugs were probably spice and cannabis. It was difficult to communicate with someone when they had taken spice. I would sometimes ask them afterwards, why they were taking it and why they weren't concentrating on getting their immigration case sorted out so that they could leave Brook House. The message was that spice could kill, as it was apparently a lot stronger than other drugs. I think that some detainees were used as guinea pigs. I saw people together in groups outside, or detainees would appear at the wing door trying to get onto the unit to see another detainee. It seemed that there was something going on.
21. I was shown on the Panorama programme pointing out detainees who I was aware were either taking drugs or possibly dealing drugs. I knew who took drugs because of their behaviour and because you could smell drugs on the unit. I commented that B wing was 'like the walking dead', and detainees were walking around stoned. B wing was the induction wing, and it should have been used for new people to stay a few nights, to have their induction and adjust to their situation and to the centre, and then to move on to another wing. However, it became a holding wing for people who were already in the centre, and we were housing people who shouldn't have been there. It meant that new people were coming in, seeing this behaviour, and picking up these habits. I think new detainees arriving to the centre would have been

concerned. Officers had no real say in detainees moving from other wings on to B wing; I believe these were more management decisions.

22. The role of officers on the induction wing was to move people off B wing, particularly the detainees who had been there the longest. We would ring around the other wings to check for availability and try to pair up detainees of the same nationality. Sometimes it was not possible to move a detainee off the induction wing because a decision had been made by management that they were to stay. For example, a detainee who was coming from E wing, but for safety reasons could not be on C or D wing, and A wing was full. Or someone who had a charter flight in two weeks and was being kept on B wing until the flight. It shouldn't have happened, but it did.
23. I was involved in a number of control and restraint (C&R) incidents and had a number of complaints made against me. The Inquiry has provided me with a significant volume of documents (nearly 1,000 pages of material) and asked questions about 24 separate incidents or complaints. I provide further information about these incidents at paragraphs 98 to 129, and paragraphs 142 to 197 below. All bar one of the complaints that was made against me was found to be unsubstantiated. The complaint that was upheld related to moving a detainee's gym clothing from the railings on the wing and arranging for it to be left in the wing office. The investigating manager found that I had acted properly in removing the items from the railing, but the complaint was upheld because the property was subsequently misplaced. All the time I felt that I was just trying to do my job, to do what I was being paid to do. I would go in thinking it was a new day and hoping things would be calmer.
24. I have been accused of being racist. It doesn't matter to me where people come from. If I could help any detainee, I would. Sometimes this term was used against staff because the detainee was not getting what they wanted. It was really difficult to deal with behaviour like this, and there were days when I found it all really tiring.

25. I never looked to overstep the line in engaging with a detainee or discussing issues with other staff. The majority of the time I took any aggression or abuse that was directed my way, even when I was trying to help the detainee, but the detainee turned his anger on me. The Inquiry has asked me about a number of comments that I am recorded as saying. I deal with the specific incidents at paragraphs 142 to 164 below. I regret some of the comments I made and the language I used. There were times when I was frustrated, and I may have spoken inappropriately about a detainee or to a detainee. I am recorded in a transcript telling a detainee he was 'whining like a fucking girl' and calling him a 'cunt' to Callum Tulley [KENCOV1030]. I would not normally use the word 'cunt', but it was used regularly in Brook House, and it was a word that I seemed to have adopted whilst working there. After the abuse that I received from detained persons, I sometimes vented my frustration without thinking. I accept that it was not appropriate or professional to speak to or about detainees in this way.

26. On 5 October 2017 there was an incident involving a detainee on E wing, who became violent and threatening to me, and it resulted in a spontaneous use of force to lock him in his room and bring back the security and safety of the wing. I was suspended following this incident because a detainee submitted a complaint about me (I provide full details of this incident at paragraphs 125 to 129 below). That was what caused me to decide to leave Brook House, so I looked for another job. In the incident report form that I filed in connection with the incident [INN000018], I recorded:

"I am verbally abused almost every day and usually threatened in one way or another almost every day. Detainees have threatened to throw hot boiling water with sugar and oil in it at me, threatened me with shanks and plastic knives, threatened to find my address, threatened me with violence or detainees try to intimidate, manipulate or condition me on a regular basis. Detainees will try and start an argument with me if they are told there is something they are not allowed or if they don't agree with the decisions made. An example being they are not allowed

extra mattresses, bedding or towels and these get removed during LBB (locks, bolts, bars checks in the rooms) checks. This occurs because I would carry out the task of removing extra items but other staff do not do this to the same standard, so this causes issues.”

27. Even before I was suspended, I was not enjoying my work. I felt unsupported, stressed out, and anxious when working at Brook House. I did not feel that I had anyone to speak to about the daily grief and aggravation. The incident on 5 October was the last straw. I never thought that I would get suspended for trying to do what was reasonable and necessary to deal with a detainee who was violent and threatening to me and others. I wasn't happy being suspended, but it allowed me time to find another job. It was important to me that the investigation was concluded and that it found that I had not done anything wrong. The complaint was found to be unsubstantiated, and I returned to work as a DCM in December 2017 following the conclusion of the investigation. I put in my notice shortly afterwards. I had enough of Brook House and felt that I could not do more than I had been doing.

28. I had been temporarily seconded to the role of DCM in August 2017, following an application and interview with Steve Skitt. I was advised that if I wanted to be a fully-fledged DCM, and not a seconded DCM, I would need to reapply for the position, which I chose not to do. I do not know why I had to reapply for the position, just that this was how it seemed to be. I left my role with G4S on 7 January 2018. I currently work as an engineer in the plumbing and water industry.

Application Process

29. As I mentioned, I was attracted to working for G4S at Brook House because I like working with people. I thought this was going to be my last change of career and that I would work for G4S until I retired. I thought the environment would be like Tinsley House detention centre.

30. I don't remember much about the recruitment process. I believe I had two interviews at a hotel in Crawley, took aptitude tests, and had CRB checks carried out. I was advised later that I was successful for the position, and I started training. I do not think the interview process prepared me for the role. Even during training, which took place at Brook House, I did not feel prepared.

Culture

31. As I said above, I think the overall culture at Brook House was volatile, aggressive, pressurised and tense.

32. Staff morale could alter day to day. There were days when I enjoyed being there, and days when I didn't. Often, I heard staff saying they were pissed off or looking for new jobs. A lot of staff came and went. The morale amongst staff was not that great at times. Some staff had a smile on their face, and there were other staff who were not bothered, and it seemed that they did not want to be there. I took the job seriously. There were a lot of good staff there, and they appeared to be doing their best.

33. If you were on the same shift pattern, you generally worked with the same people. I believe I had a good working relationship with my colleagues. There were groups of officers who used to hang out together, and probably built their own work friendship community. I just focussed on my work.

34. I think there was an empathetic, friendly, and helpful approach towards the detained persons at Brook House. I can only comment on what I saw and not what happened in the rest of the centre, but in my view most officers were there to help and to do what they could for the detainees. I was surprised by some of the things that I saw on Panorama, as I did not see anything like that when I was working at Brook House. There were discussions between officers and detainees when voices were raised, and detainees would often threaten and abuse staff. I would stay close in case my colleagues needed back up, but I do not recall seeing mistreatment. It would

surprise me if that was going on. People worked at Brook House to do a job, and not to mistreat anyone. I did not see attitudes that jumped out as inappropriate or over the line.

35. Brook House was not how it was shown on Panorama. We had to do C&R and it was the last thing that I wanted to be involved in, restraining someone because they would not voluntarily walk to their flight. There were a lot of staff who did not want to do C&R, and staff who couldn't be put into that situation, so similar names would appear. I cannot recall how many C&Rs I did.

36. I recall one incident from August 2015, when I was involved in the planned removal of a detainee from E wing for a return flight. The detainee refused to leave his room and the C&R team was instructed to enter. The detainee struggled and was brought to the ground during the restraint. I had control of his right arm, with my back to the detainee, and I felt a sudden pain on my right shoulder. The detainee had bitten me. I had to go to hospital to make sure that the skin had not been broken. A copy of the incident report is at [INN000019] and photographs of the wounds are at [INN000020].

37. The Panorama programme did not show the level of violence, abuse, and intimidation that staff at Brook House faced. There were some detainees who would think nothing of causing aggravation through the day. They would say anything to get what they wanted and would complain if they did not get it.

38. I had no concerns that I can remember on how the values of G4S or its culture impacted those who were detained at Brook House, the management of staff, or vulnerable detained persons.

39. I think we were given support from the senior management team. The senior managers appeared to be professional. They visited the wing in the mornings or the afternoon to see how things were going. They might spend five to ten minutes on the wing. It would have been nice if officers could have had a chat with them about

confidential issues, but I'm not sure that things were kept totally confidential at Brook House. If I went to senior management with an issue, I felt they would have spoken to others about it. Staff gossiped at Brook House.

40. My line manager was, I believe, Stuart Povey, but it is possible that Chris Donnelly and Nathan Ring were also line managers at one point. In my view the DCMs were doing the best they could. There was a lot of running around, and I got a taste of that when I was temporarily seconded. DCMs used to be DCOs, and they knew what was going on around the centre. If there were any issues, I would speak to them. When I was a DCM I participated in DCM meetings, and we talked about what was going on for the day. It was a fast-paced environment, and most of the time we were just trying to keep up from the moment you arrived until lock-up.

41. I am not aware of an occasion when someone raised a concern over the treatment of a detained person.

Physical Layout of Brook House

42. I have reviewed a map showing the location of the buildings within Brook House [CJS004587]. Having a detention centre that looks and runs like a prison does not leave the individual detainee feeling too comfortable when they arrive. I think new detainees were concerned arriving into Brook House. Many detainees were there because something had gone wrong with their immigration status, and they shouldn't be in an environment like Brook House.

43. There were things that could have been done to improve the buildings. The courtyards were tarmacked, and I think having a grassed area or field within the site for detained persons to exercise on or use for recreational purposes such as football or cricket, or to meet other detained persons, would improve the physical set up. There was no fresh air on the wings, but you could open the roof on the wing in Brook House. It was much nicer when we could have the roof open in summertime

and have the light coming in. It made a difference on the wings. I think the wings could have done with painting and brightening up. It would have improved them.

44. Everything was very confined, including having netting overhead on the wings. It was there for a reason, but it could have been designed differently. It was a prison environment, not a detention centre. Because it was a prison building, people behaved like they were in prison. Many of the detainees had come from prison having committed serious offences. Coming to Brook House was a level down. They were unlocked from their rooms at 8am, and the only time they were not allowed out was for roll count for lunch and dinner, and then in the evening for lock-up. People were free to move around the centre and everyone had a mobile phone. In that way, it was nothing like a prison. There were approximately 400 people at Brook House (about 120 each on A wing, C wing and D wing, 60 on B wing, 12 on E wing and 6 in CSU (Care and Separation Unit)), and they sought to increase the numbers by putting in extra beds on the ground floor rooms.
45. Tinsley House was a detention centre, and it was run like a detention centre. They were two very different environments.
46. E wing was used for housing individuals for a number of reasons. Individuals were moved there for flights, transfers to other sites or prisons, mental health issues, constant watch of detainees on ACDTs, medical reasons, violence towards others, or refusal to share a room with others. Individuals would be allowed access to the wing facilities and exercise yard and allowed off the wing if authorised by senior management. They would also be reviewed regularly by DCMs to determine whether they needed to remain on E wing, and if so, for how long. Senior management would oversee the reviews carried out by DCMs. From memory, I believe there were set questions that DCMs had to answer to identify whether it was justified keeping a detainee on E wing, but there were always reasons why the detainee was being kept there and not on one of the main wings (for example, if there was a charter flight in a few days' time, or the detainee was awaiting a medical review). Depending on their circumstances, and subject to senior management and

health care reviews, the detainee could come out of E wing and go back into the main population. E wing was different to other wings as it was much smaller and if detainees were not authorised to use the main facilities in Brook House, they would have to remain on the wing.

Policies and Procedures

47. I believe the policies and procedures were made aware to me at initial training. If I needed to use them, I would know where to go in the wing office to find the policy folder. I do not know about other staff members using them on a regular basis. I found the policies useful. I am sure they were maintained and updated, but I cannot remember exactly. I believe new drafts were brought down to the wing periodically, changed over, and signed for by the DCO or DCM that was on the wing at the time.

Training

General Training

48. My initial training with G4S at Brook House started in January 2015. I believe the training was six weeks with two weeks of shadowing afterwards. When the shadowing was completed, we were on the rota.

49. I recall that C&R training was done towards the middle to end of the programme (weeks four to six). Although we were attending Brook House for training, we didn't get to see the wings. Different managers and trainers attended the classroom on different days. It was about four to six weeks into the training before we were shown around Brook House. My first impression was that I had walked into a Cat B prison. There were people everywhere and they were curious to see us walking through the centre with an officer. I do not remember anyone leaving during the initial training course, but I recollect that a number of people left soon after. There were maybe 12 to 15 staff on my training course, and maybe a quarter left G4S within about 12 months.

50. When I look back, I do not think that we were prepared. I think we could have done more in training around speaking with detainees and understanding what it was like from their perspective. There were a lot of other things involved in the training, but this was not part of the package. The training allowed you to do the job, but it did not prepare us for how to cope with the day-to-day of Brook House. I also think that it would have been helpful to walk around the centre early on in the training, because it would show you what it was like from the beginning.

51. I was offered and attended refresher training courses on first aid, including defibrillator training, and C&R.

52. In terms of my secondment to the DCM role, I was given training in the form of shadowing other DCMs for a few weeks to see how the role was carried out. I was not enrolled on a training or management course. I do not think I received adequate training or time to adjust and prepare for the role ahead of me.

53. As far as I am aware, activities officers were G4S officers and would have completed the same training as all other G4S DCOs at Brook House, such as first aid and C&R. I am not aware of any actual 'activities' officer training, but I did not work in this department. I believe activities officers probably had to learn on the job, by observing what fellow activities officers were doing, and by coming up with ideas/plans for activities for the detainees.

Personal Protection Training

54. I do not remember attending a personal protection course with G4S. I have no observations to make about personal protection training.

Use of Force

55. I attended and completed use of force (C&R) training during initial training, I believe around January/ February 2015. I then completed refresher training around February 2016 and February 2017. I am not sure of the exact dates, but refresher

training was done about every 12 months. I enjoyed the use of force training and how it was delivered by the trainers. I thought they were knowledgeable, they made it easy to understand and learn, they gave practical training and advice, and they also made it realistic with scenarios.

The role of a DCO and relationships with detained persons

56. I have been provided with a copy of the job description by the Inquiry [CJS004294]. I believe I may have received a copy of the job description and in my view, it reflects the role and responsibilities of a DCO. On the left side of the document, it highlights what we were trying to do, e.g., maintain security, complete ACDTs, deal with aggressive or abusive behaviour, and provide information to detainees. I tried to adhere to these responsibilities as much as possible.

57. I spoke to the detainees on a regular basis, encouraging them to keep busy and proactive. We might have a game of pool or go outside and kick around the football for five minutes. I would ask how they were getting on and if they were okay. If we had language barriers, I would ask another detainee or member of staff to interpret, use hand signals and facial expressions, find a dictionary in the library in the detainee's language, use a PC in the IT rooms, or use the telephone interpreter service in the office, which was available if needed.

58. I do not remember incentives being given to detained persons to encourage good or positive behaviour. If incentives had been available, I do not know how they would have worked, as every detainee would have to have them. I do not know what incentives they could offer detainees to manage behaviour. Some detainees were workers in the centre or on the wings (e.g., in the main kitchens or in the serveries, or as cleaners). Detainees were given a job if they fit certain criteria and checks were done.

59. Detainees were put on an ACDT because they were vulnerable, self-harming or suicidal. An initial ACDT review with a detainee would involve a conversation to

get information about how they were feeling and why they wanted to hurt themselves. That was then discussed with whoever was setting the parameters for the ACDT, usually healthcare or a DCM, and the observations would be agreed. The DCO role during the ACDT process was to record entries and observations in the ACDT booklet at certain times. This meant finding the detainee and either observing them or having a conversation with them. We would also record if they took their meals or not. The observations and conversations with the detainee were discussed with healthcare or the DCM. As part of their review, they would consider whether the observations should remain in place or be removed. As a DCO, I observed a number of ACDT reviews, and as a DCM I took part in the reviews. I believe the ACDT process was a positive one. Sometimes by talking to a detainee, you could help him deescalate his feelings about himself, or he might just have needed someone to speak to.

60. If the detainee was off the wing when the observations needed to be done, then the officer would have to leave the wing, which could leave the wing understaffed until the officer returned. At times, being required to sit in on reviews, could also leave the wing understaffed.
61. I dealt with a number of individuals who carried out acts of self-harm. I am unable to quantify how many or how often they took place. I think that frustration, stress and anxiety caused some detainees to self-harm. I think it would have been helpful to have more training on how to deal with acts of self-harm, on the reasons why people did it, and on ways to help people not to self-harm. This would benefit staff and detainees.
62. I am asked about the process in place for preventing drugs from entering Brook House. I believe detainees were pat down searched and a metal detector wand used on arrival at reception. Belongings and suitcases were searched, and detainees and visitors were searched prior to visits. Warning markers were on the Person Escort Record (PER) of each detainee arriving into Brook House, which identified risk factors such as drugs and alcohol (as well as suicide/self-harm, and other factors). I

was not aware of staff bringing drugs into Brook House. Staff were not ordinarily searched coming into work, although from about 2017, a number of staff searches were conducted and sniffer dogs were on site. I think this happened about five or six times. I believe post was scanned for drugs. If someone came into the centre and was found trying to pass over drugs, staff would call the police. The fact that there were drugs in the centre means that the process for preventing drugs coming in did not seem to work.

63. In my interview with PSU on 29 January 2018 [HOM002547], I was asked about officers bringing spice into the wing, and I said that it was possible as it happened in prisons, but I was not aware of any officers doing this at Brook House.

64. I did not work for the welfare team or for the security team.

Relationships with staff

65. I was not aware of any racist attitudes or behaviours amongst staff. There were a number of staff from black or minority ethnic backgrounds. I was not aware of any bullying or racism. I think that most people felt that we were there to get a job done and to get through the day. I was not aware of any homophobic or misogynistic attitudes or behaviours amongst staff.

66. I never experienced bullying at Brook House by other staff. I was not aware of, or had any concerns about, other staff being bullied. I cannot remember dealing with a complaint regarding bullying.

Relationship with the Home Office

67. The only times I spoke to Home Office staff at Brook House was if a detainee had asked me to enquire about something for them, for example, if they were waiting to hear back from Home Office staff about their case, or if they had a flight arranged and when it was going to be. I had no problems with Home Office Staff, and they could phone to the wing if they needed anything. In general, I felt that the Home

Office should have done more to speed up the process for their cases. Some people were in detention for long periods, more than four to six months.

Relationship with Senior Managers

68. My relationships with senior managers were friendly and formal. They were available throughout the day, and they were on call. They were available to help me if needed (e.g., if they had to do a review), easy to talk to, approachable, and would also visit all the wings and areas of the centre on a daily basis. I think they provided good leadership for the day to day running of the centre.

Relationship with DCMs

69. DCMs seemed to be experienced and were able to provide help, guidance and support when needed. They were knowledgeable and knew what they were doing. I was managed by Stuart Povey on A wing, who provided excellent guidance and support and was on the wing on a daily basis. I do not remember any specific dates, but I did have performance reviews carried out. My relationship with DCMs was friendly, constructive, and aimed at keeping the wing running efficiently. I think the quality of management of the DCMs was good.

70. When I became a DCM, I found that the DCOs were very helpful. They were open and cooperative, and they seemed to accept me as a DCM. There were no apparent issues that I was aware of.

Relationship with other DCOs

71. Most of the DCOs I worked with were experienced and seemed good at their job. Some DCOs tended to take a step back if they felt unable to deal with a situation and they would let others deal with it instead. There were DCOs who would spend more time sitting in the office. They would do work, but they were not out on the wing having a presence. I think for some DCOs they felt a bit 'safer' if they were not seen. Most of the time, I felt that I could rely on the DCOs for support, but

sometimes I felt that I could not rely on some people. This was my overall feeling about officers in general.

Relationship with Healthcare Staff

72. Healthcare staff seemed to be busy every day. The staff in general I think were experienced, helpful, understanding, and seemed to deal well with medical emergencies concerning detained persons. They were on hand if a medical situation arose during the use of force, and they would help out and do what was necessary in that moment. As far as I remember, the healthcare team would advise us on detainees and their medication requirements. They were available to see detainees every day and appeared to have the detainee's interests and welfare as a priority.

73. In my interview with the PSU on 29 January 2018 [HOM002547], I was asked about the adequacy of mental healthcare in Brook House. I responded that the mental health nurses (RMNS) appeared to be good at their jobs. I saw healthcare professionals at work in the healthcare unit and throughout the centre on a daily basis, and I felt they always tried to help each individual who they dealt with. In my opinion, they were professional and knowledgeable. During ACDT reviews, they engaged with the individual in a professional and friendly manner and were happy to help and give advice when required. I don't believe that I was made aware of complaints regarding the quality or adequacy of healthcare provided to detained persons. If I was made aware of concerns, I would have advised the detainee to speak to healthcare or to a manager, or to complete a complaint form.

Disciplinary and grievance process

74. I do not remember being involved in a disciplinary investigation into my own conduct or the conduct of another member of staff. I do not remember being involved in a grievance investigation against me, or others, or as a witness. At no time did I submit a grievance about another member of staff.

75. As mentioned at paragraph 26 above, I was suspended following an incident involving a detainee, but this was not a disciplinary investigation. It was an investigation into a detainee's complaint, which was found to be unsubstantiated.

Staffing levels

76. Staffing was an issue, and there were staff shortages on the wings and generally around the centre. We did not have enough staff for the work we had to do. Staff worked in shift rotas and the days were long. From memory, A, C and D wing should have had at least four staff on each wing. Generally, it was about three. B wing should have had four staff because it was induction, but most of the time it was only two or three people. When we were short staffed, officers were drafted in from other departments or from Tinsley House (Tinsley House staff generally did not want to be at Brook House). I regularly did overtime at Brook House, which meant that I was onsite more often.

77. Staff shortages were caused by staff leaving, sickness, annual leave and other reasons, such as bed watches/observations or C&R events.

78. Short staffing had a big impact on detainees. If there were only two of us on the wing, we would not be able to monitor the exercise yard. That was another source of frustration for detainees if they wanted to go outside to get fresh air or play sport. It also impacted on people's safety and the security of the centre, which affected staff morale. I regularly heard officers complaining that there were not enough staff. Short staffing meant that officers had to deal with much more, and the working day was a lot harder because there were not enough people. We were run off our feet trying to take care of the wings. Everyone was under pressure to keep performing to the same level as if fully staffed, but I believe the level of service to detainees suffered as there was not enough staff to deal with their issues. We got on with what we had. G4S were recruiting people, but in my view, they were bringing in the wrong sort of people who were leaving quickly. I think G4S did not always focus on having the people with the right skills doing the job.

79. On days when we were short-staffed, there were so many different tasks to be done at different times – meals, induction, dealing with detainee requests, LBB checks, moving people off the wing. We needed help moving people off the wing, or otherwise we were on our own on the wing, or we had to leave a colleague on their own. Requests and other issues from detainees were frequent. When we were busy or short-staffed it was more difficult to understand when an issue was important to the person, for example, needing to speak to their solicitor or to the Home Office. Sometimes my attention was diverted because of the other things that were happening at the time, like detainees waiting to move off the wing. I would tell detainees that I wanted to help them, but that I needed to move detainees off the wing, and they should come back 10 - 20 minutes later for me to help them. I tried to stick to my word, so that they did not feel that they were being fobbed off.
80. A common issue was detainees asking for a curtain for their toilet area because another detainee had taken the one from the room. No one checked that the room curtains were there, or that they had duvets. Detainees would understandably get frustrated if they had no curtain because they couldn't go to the toilet. If we had a spare one on the wing or in an empty room, we would provide it but sometimes they were not readily available in the centre and detainees would move and take them elsewhere, along with the window curtains.
81. The ideal staffing level would have been five or six members of staff on each wing. On B wing, that would have allowed two officers to do movements, and three or four in the office and on the wing to resolve the issues that were cropping up, such as the fax machine not working, detainees needing clothes, phone credit or money on their shop card, a new sim card, or a letter they were expecting. It could be a constant barrage and I tried to deal with it all as best as I could.
82. When I was seconded to the role of DCM, I found myself, on occasion, covering all five wings. There should have been a DCM for each wing as well as the other DCMs on site, like Oscar 1. Due to staffing, I was the DCM covering A, B and E wing.

Sometimes, I also had to go to C and D wing to make sure that the detainee workers were paid, or that diaries were signed off. I didn't think that it was part of the job to cover every wing in the centre, but I would do it. In my interview with PSU on 29 January 2018, I said that some days, I was managing every wing in the centre due to staff shortages [HOM002547]. I accept having made this remark. Staff shortages were a constant issue during my time at Brook House. When we were short of DCMs, I tried to manage the wings and deal with as much as I possibly could. It meant that some days, I was literally flying from one side of the centre to the other to try to cover everything and deal with issues as they arose.

83. I am not sure if there were enough healthcare staff on duty within the centre as I didn't work in healthcare, but the detainees had access to healthcare every day to meet their medical or welfare needs.

84. I do not know about the staffing levels of the activities team, as I did not work in that department, but I do recall days where there was no activities officer around and the wing DCOs were asked to get equipment out or open the yards.

Tinsley House Staff

85. I feel that the staff in general were able to adapt and change their approach from Tinsley to Brook House. Some officers had already worked in Brook House previously. I am not aware that there was any specific training provided to staff coming from Tinsley House to Brook House.

Treatment of Detained Persons

Detained Persons generally

86. I did not work on reception. Reception was a separate area within the centre from the induction wing. It was where new people would arrive and get booked into the centre. They were searched and provided with food and a drink. The reception team

would then move the detainee from reception to the induction wing (which was B wing during the relevant period).

87. I used to work on the induction wing for new arrivals and when on shift I carried out the induction of individuals, to help ensure they knew what to expect whilst detained and how to get around the centre. As I said above, it was the DCO's role to move people off the induction wing. You could do detainee movements at any time of day, but I tried to do as many as I could in the morning, and as many as I could in the afternoon. We needed to have a cleaner on B wing to clean the rooms before new detainees arrived, but sometimes the officers did it.

Activities for Individuals

88. As I recall, activities were available every day for detainees. There was cricket or football, the gym, library, IT room or arts and crafts room. A big issue at the centre was detainees not having enough to do. They were bored. Not everyone enjoyed football and cricket. They could have done with more activities although there was only so much space available within the confines of the building. I have no opinion on further activities that could be run at Brook House.

89. It was the responsibility of activities officers to ensure that detainees were aware of the activities going on. Sometimes the officers suggested things for detainees to do like having a pool competition, and we did that on A wing a few times as there were pool tables on the wings for the detainees to use.

90. Detainees had TVs in their rooms, or they played music on the wing. The wings could become very noisy. Detainees would be with their friends, and they might be chatting, playing pool and listening to music. Some detainees were too intimidated or scared to come out of their rooms. I tried to encourage them not to sit in their room all day, but to go outside to get fresh air, to circulate and speak to other detainees, or move around the centre.

91. There were days when everyone was alright and there was no aggravation on the wing. People were relaxed and there were no issues. We would play pool with detainees, kick around a football or watch them play cricket. In the summer, we opened the roof and let the sun come in onto the wing.

Immigration Rule 35 Process

92. I do not recall having any involvement in the Rule 35 process. If a detainee had concerns and advised me of an issue, I would have made healthcare and my manager aware. I have no experiences of detained persons being reviewed under Rule 35.

Use of Force

93. Use of force was a last resort in Brook House. A planned C&R incident took place if a detainee was refusing to move from one wing to another or refusing to be removed from the centre. Planned C&Rs often took place in the evening so that there was less activity on the wings as the other detainees were locked up. A manager would normally speak to the detainee to ask them to walk, and it was only if they refused that force was used. Some people would fight because they did not want to move. Only occasionally we were directed to go straight into the room.

94. The usual process was that everyone involved in the C&R would meet, get kitted up, and the manager would outline why we were doing the C&R. On camera, we would be asked if everyone was fit, healthy and well. We would allocate roles so that everyone knew what they were doing. If everyone was ready to go, we would make our way to the wing. We tried to avoid force, and detainees were always given the opportunity to walk of their own accord.

95. A spontaneous or unplanned use of force happened when a member of staff found themselves in a situation where a detainee was threatening staff, other detainees or themselves. It was important to try to get the situation under control as quickly as possible for the safety and security of the detainee and others. If support was needed,

DCOs called a first response. Our training emphasised that any force needed to be necessary, reasonable and justifiable. Force was always the last resort.

96. In my opinion, use of force techniques were only used when necessary and reasonable and I am not aware that they were used excessively at Brook House. I did not have concerns about use of force incidents that I was involved in or that I was not involved in but became aware of. We tried to avoid using C&R techniques, and we talked to the detainee to calm down any situation. If they had a problem, we would try to resolve the problem for them.

97. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on a number of C&R / use of force incidents that I was involved in.

3 June 2017 – D1538

98. I have been provided with document CJS001619 relating to an unplanned intervention that took place against D1538 in the IT suite. The incident reports record that D1538 was using aggressive language to DCO Instone-Brewer in the IT suite, and he then physically assaulted DCO Fiddy by coming into his personal space and grabbing his neck. A manager attended the IT suite and after consulting the Duty Director, D1538 was removed from association using rule 40. The Inquiry identified me as the DCM who attended the scene, but this is not correct. I was not a DCM in June 2017, and the paperwork was signed by DCM Andy Lydon.

99. The detainee made a complaint [HOM002190 row 12] which was investigated by the Home Office, PSU team [CJS00348]. The PSU investigation found that the CCTV footage did not support D1538's version of events [at para. 6.1.18], that D1538 moved in an aggressive manner towards a DCO and tried to grab the DCO by the neck [at para. 7.3.4]. The investigation concluded that the use of force was not unprovoked, that DCO Fiddy's use of force was justified, and that the level of force used was within reasonable and necessary levels. The complaint made by D1538 about this incident was found to be unsubstantiated.

5 June 2017 – D720

100. I have been provided with document CJS004835 which is a security information report regarding an incident when D720 tried to get onto B wing to use the fax machine, but when he was told by DCO Matchett to use the fax machine on D wing instead, he pushed past DCO Matchett's arm on the B wing door. D720 walked towards the fax machine threatening the officer saying, 'You better not come off this wing or I'll smash you up, you fucking pussy'. I was named as a witness to the incident.

101. I have no recollection of this incident, and I do not recollect making a contribution to a use of force form or providing an account at the time. I am asked by the Inquiry for my view on DCO Matchett's conduct and whether he could have diffused the situation by any other means. DCO Matchett told D720 to use the fax on D wing, but D720 did not comply, pushed past DCO Matchett onto the wing and proceeded to threaten him. There was no apparent requirement for D720 to come to B wing; the fax machine could have been used a reason to get on to B wing for some other purpose. DCO Matchett completed an SIR, which is probably what I would have done in that situation.

25 June 2017 – D56

102. I have been provided with documents CJS005588 and CJS000896 regarding an unplanned use of force on B wing on 25 June 2017. I recall this incident, although I am vague on the details, and I have refreshed my memory with the information included within the use of force report form. My statement records [CJS005588, at p.14]:

"I was informed that D56 had been violent towards two detainees and DCO Milburn and DCO Mansi. I entered the room and found D56 acting in an aggressive manner. I asked him what was happening but

D56 was shouting and swearing and did not respond to my question. He came towards me in an angry and aggressive manner with both his fists clenched then almost immediately he struck me in the face with a clenched fist. Fearing for my safety after being struck in the face and fearing for the safety of others in the room I managed to take hold of D56 in the room, right next to the toilet area, by placing him in a headlock with him bent over forwards. ... He was in a headlock during this time for approximately 20-30 seconds. All this time, D56 was shouting and screaming and behaving in a violent manner by trying to kick me in the legs. As I got to the door DCO Milburn and DCO Mansi began to restrain D56 by the arms whilst I went from a headlock to controlling his head movement as per C&R restraint techniques, by placing one of my hands to the back of his head and my other hand under his chin. During this time I was trying to instruct D56 to calm down and listen to my instructions to him, but due to his behaviour and his shouting and screaming D56 was not listening.”

103. A first response team attended the incident and I saw D56 placed in handcuffs. I was replaced by DCO Derek Murphy as the head officer and D56 was moved to E wing as there were no room on CSU.

104. On the use of force form [CJS005588] I am listed as supervising officer who authorised the use of force [p.2]. This was an unplanned use of force. I completed the use of force form because I was the officer who had initiated the use of force, but I would not say that I was the supervising officer. I was a DCO working on B wing at the time. My role as DCO was to help to run B wing as efficiently and effectively as possible, and to support my colleagues and detainees on the wing as best I could. This was an unplanned restraint to protect myself (after I was assaulted) and others around me. D56 posed a safety risk to staff and detainees and in my assessment, it was necessary to use force to contain the situation. I had tried to speak to him to understand what was going on, but D56 was not responding.

105. I put D56 in a headlock after I was punched in the face. I was initially unable to use a C&R technique because of the size and shape of the room. The Inquiry has asked me to describe the positioning of my body as against D56 during this manoeuvre, and why a headlock was my preferred response to D56's behaviour. I believe I was on one side of D56 and had my arm over the top of the back of his head and around his forehead; I tried to keep him bent over forwards to reduce the risk of further assaults. This was not my preferred response to the situation. I had tried to speak to D56 to understand why he was threatening other detainees and officers. I was totally shocked when he punched me in the face, and my adrenaline was pumping. My initial response was to try to gain control of D56 so that he was not a risk to others. I adopted the headlock as an instantaneous response to manage a threatening situation. It was not planned.

106. At no time did I restrict D56's breathing. When involved in a C&R incident, it was necessary to consider positional asphyxia and ensure the support and comfort of the detainee whilst being restrained. I believe I considered these points as best I could at the time. As soon as I was able, and with the support of my colleagues, I assumed control of D56's head as per C&R techniques. He was in a headlock for no more than 30 seconds.

107. The Inquiry has asked the reasons why a body worn camera was not used on this occasion. I do not recall the reasons why. I am not sure whether I had been issued with a body worn camera; it is possible that at this time, they were not available to us. If I had been issued with a camera, it may be that I did not have time to turn it on. I responded to a situation where two female staff members and two detainees were under attack, and my thoughts centred on assisting them as quickly as possible.

108. I am provided with the following documents regarding an incident on 30 June 2017 involving D87, and discussions that took place following the incident: CJS004083, CJS001604, CJS005566, HOM002371, CJS001448.

109. With the passage of time, I do not recall this particular incident, but I have refreshed my memory from the documents. The documents show that I was assigned to general duties on B wing on 30 June 2017 [CJS004083]. I was called to a planned C&R incident on the CSU involving D87 [CJS001604, p.12 and CJS005566, p.17]. D87 was a large and strong individual. He was moved from E wing to the CSU earlier in the day because he was threatening to harm staff and to take them hostage. During his removal, he attempted to fight off the officers and was extremely aggressive. Two officers were injured in the removal and required hospital treatment.

110. When he was in CSU, he told staff that he wanted to kill himself and he ripped up a bed sheet, put it around his neck and covered the observation panel. I was part of the C&R team that was tasked with going into D87's room to remove any items that he could use to harm himself. My incident statement says the following [CJS001604, p.12]:

“We entered the room and found D87 laying down on the table at the end of the room. I immediately took hold of D87's right arm to prevent any injury to myself or my colleagues and made my way to gaining a straight arm lock. D87 is a powerful man so it was very important not to lose my grip on his arm and maintain the lock I had on him. Whilst D87 was being restrained, the room was cleared of any items so D87 could not commit any further acts of self harm and the ligature was removed from around his neck by one of my colleagues. After the room was cleared, DCM Robinson instructed us to leave the room one at a time.”

111. The documents indicate that DCM Dan Robinson gave the briefing for the planned restraint of D87. Briefings usually took between 5 and 10 minutes and would involve the DCM, healthcare and the team going into the room. I knew nothing of the incident until I kitted up to carry out the C&R. As a DCO we would find out the reason for a use of force at the briefing. The officers would also decide between us who was doing what – the person who was responsible for controlling the head usually took the lead, as they were the person who was talking to the detainee and telling him what was going to happen next. There was also a manager overseeing the team. If you were a part of the C&R team, you would not have a Body Worn Camera as the manager who was supervising the restraint would film it, or another officer would film it.

112. I am asked why it was necessary to use such force, and whether I considered the force used to have been proportionate to the risk posed by D87. It was necessary to use force to prevent D87 from harming himself further. We had to protect detainees from hurting themselves, and unless he voluntarily removed the ligature from around his neck after we spoke to him, the only way to do so was to use force to remove it. The planned use of force was not my decision but, in my view, the force used was proportionate to deal with the situation and the risk posed by D87, particularly in light of the restraint that took place earlier in the day and the injuries caused to other officers. It was appropriate to remove the ligature from his neck and any items that could be used to harm himself or others.

113. The Inquiry has asked me to consider whether the situation could have been dealt with in any way other than the use of force. As I said above, the use of force was used as a last resort. Officers and managers would always try talking to the detainee, to encourage them to calm down or to walk voluntarily if that was the case. Force was used when we had tried everything else. It is clear from the documents provided by the Inquiry that D87 was asked a number of times to walk voluntarily to CSU earlier in the day, but he refused, and force was necessary to remove him from E wing.

114. I am asked whether C&R training equipped me for dealing with this situation. I feel that it equipped me as best as it could. I do not know how else you could deal with a volatile, self-harming detainee where every other avenue (talking and de-escalation) had been tried and failed.
115. I believe we had a debrief after the incident led by the DCM, Dan Robinson, most likely in the rest room. It would have been attended by all those involved in the restraint and by a member of the healthcare team. The purpose of the debrief was to see that we were all okay, or to raise any issues about the restraint. I don't believe that I had anything to say about the restraint at the time.
116. The documents show that D87 made a complaint on 3 July 2017 regarding the two incidents on 30 June [CJS001448, HOM002190 row 10]. He alleged gross misconduct and gross medical negligence by members of G4S staff. I was not aware that D87 had made a complaint or that the complaint was investigated by the PSU. I had no involvement in any investigation. I have reviewed the summary of my involvement in the C&R incident at paragraphs 6.51 to 6.56 of the PSU report [CJS001448], and it reflects the contents of the use of force statement that I prepared after the incident. I do not believe that I was made aware of the outcome of this investigation or provided with a copy of the report.
117. I note that the investigating officer found that all members of staff acted in a professional manner and followed Home Office procedures and guidelines, and she concluded that the allegations made by D87 were unsubstantiated [paragraphs 7.3 and 7.4]. The report concludes at paragraph 8.3:

“All the officers involved in the two incidents should be commended for their dealings with D87 and recognised for their efforts during two particularly challenging and protracted incidents. It is evident from all the information obtained that D87 could be a difficult gentleman to deal with; and he was clearly a strong individual. In the circumstances, all

the officers remained professional and polite with D87, and treated him with respect, despite the manner in which he spoke to them.”

118. The Inquiry has provided me with a video [KENCOV1039 V2017070300005], transcript [KENCOV1039 V2017070300008] and notes [CPS000025] of a discussion that took place with Callum Tulley on 3 July 2017 about the incident with D87. The Inquiry’s question was:

“It is believed that on that date, you were in the company of a number of other officers when you discussed the restraint of D87 the previous Friday and subsequently, whilst on your break, you discussed it again. You described the restraint to DCO Tully as ‘messy’ and referred to D87 as ‘that fucking [surname] down in CSU’. ... Please explain what you meant when you described the restraint as ‘messy’.”

119. In the BBC undercover notes for 3 July 2017, it is recorded: “On B-wing, Darren talked about a restraint on Friday that was ‘messy’” [CPS000025]. This is not correct. I did not refer to the incident as ‘messy’. Having looked at the transcript [KENCOV1039 V2017070300008-3], it was Callum Tulley who asked me whether the incident was ‘messy’, and I said it wasn’t messy. The transcript records the following:

90 **V2017070300008 – 3**
91 **Callum Tulley:** I heard you’ve had a messy one, Thursday? Oh, was it Friday? It’s Friday,
92 wasn’t it? You’ve got a messy one, didn’t you?
93 **Darren Thomsett:** [Inaudible].
94 **Callum Tulley:** Friday, it was the bit you’ve been involved in a bit of a messy one, right, yeah?
95 **Darren Thomsett:** Ah, it weren’t messy. It were fucking, [D87]
96 **Callum Tulley:** Two people went to hospital. If that’s not messy, I don’t know what is.
97 **Darren Thomsett:** No, it had nothing to do with me, mate.
98 **Callum Tulley:** All right. Not you personally, I’m saying. You’ve got kitted up, no?
99 **Darren Thomsett:** Yeah. That’s right. Because he started trying to harm himself with
100 [Inaudible].
101 **Callum Tulley:** Oh, you’re on the second team.
102 **Darren Thomsett:** Yeah.
103 **Callum Tulley:** All right.

120. Callum Tulley notes that I was on the second team to deal with D87. It seems that he originally thought I was part of the first team to move D87 to CSU, during which two officers were injured.

121. The BBC notes state, “*D87 was due to have been moved to a different centre more equipped to manage him*” [CPS000025]. The Inquiry has asked me a number of questions about the fact that I told DCO Tulley that D87 was due to be moved to another centre. However, it is not clear from the notes that I was the one who told Callum Tulley this information, and it was not recorded in the transcript provided by the Inquiry [KENCOV1039 V2017070300008-3]. To the best of my knowledge, I was not aware that D87 was being moved from Brook House or what centre he was being moved to. I was not involved in the decision-making process around detainee movements.

122. I have looked at the video [KENCOV1039 V2017070300005] which shows me telling another officer what happened with D87 the previous Friday. I told the officer that after coming off my break about 7pm, I got a phone call saying that either me or another officer needed to get kitted up. When I was asked what it was about, I was told ‘that fucking [D87] down in CSU’. It is difficult to make out the rest of the conversation with the officer, but I appear to describe D87 as ‘nasty’ and a ‘horrible individual’. This would have been based on the previous C&R, his history, and his threats to harm staff and take them hostage.

26 July 2017 – D1373

123. The Inquiry has invited me to comment on a statement I made in relation to a use of force incident on 26 July 2017, involving D1373 [CJS005645]. That day I was shadowing DCM Brackenbridge in the role of Residential Manager of A wing and E wing, as I had recently been seconded to the role of DCM Residential Manager. In my statement, I describe an incident where a female DCO colleague was hit on her arm by D1373, and he tried to push past her to exit his room. To protect the officer and other members of staff, I put my right hand and arm in front

of the detainee's chest area to stop him from leaving the room. He stepped back, and then made a move to leave the room. I again put out my right hand and arm, and using reasonable force, I pushed the detainee just enough so that I could close the door to the room. The detainee did not suffer any injuries.

124. Having looked at my report, it appears that I used reasonable force to get D1373 back into his room after he had assaulted a female member of staff. I say in my statement that I was on A wing to get ready for lunchtime servery, so it appears that this incident took place during lock up, when all detainees were supposed to be in their rooms for roll count. I used reasonable force to prevent any further assaults or incidents, and to maintain good order and security on the wing.

5 October 2017 – D1020

125. On 5 October 2017, I was involved in an unplanned use of force incident with a detainee on E wing. The incident led to my suspension while an investigation into the incident was conducted. A copy of the incident report that I submitted on 5 October 2017 is attached [INN000018].

126. The incident report sets out full details of the incident. In brief, detainee D1020 became agitated that another person had been given a pie or pasty from the servery worker. He became very loud and vocal and threw a plastic food trolley and wheelie bin across the wing in anger. I tried to deescalate the situation by speaking to him, but he waved his arms at me and touched the side of my face. I could see he had a white plastic eating utensil in his hand, and he was pointing it in my face, which I perceived as a direct threat. I was worried that this was a plastic utensil that he had sharpened up. I advised D1020 that I was placing him under Rule 40 for damaging centre property. I intended escorting him to CSU, but he walked back to his room. My intention was to get him off the wing so that other people were not at risk. When he reached his room he attacked me, grabbing my shirt and knocking my ID badge to the floor. I defended myself by pushing him away using an outward palm, while trying to close the door to the room, but he kept coming at me in a threatening

manner. Every time he grabbed me, he dug his nails in and I had to prise his hands away. Another colleague, DCO Teyron Evans, joined to support me, and I managed to press the button for a first response. I state in my report:

“I didn’t wish for this situation, I was trying to show fairness, but having to be firm at the same time and trying to tell [D1020] this behaviour is not acceptable. I was just trying to defend myself and DCO Evans and I had to do enough to deter [D1020] from succeeding. I used reasonable and necessary force at all times. My hands were never clenched, and I used body language to try to deter [D1020] by going into a defensive stance with my hands and arms up, but he still came back towards me in an angry and aggressive manner. Again all this time, D1020 is angry and aggressive towards us, spitting his words and saliva coming from his mouth.”

127. I was conscious that there were no cameras in the room so I was trying not to go into the room, but to stay in the doorway so the cameras could see me as much as possible. When first response arrived, D1020 threw a plastic bottle at me which hit the side of my face, and a thick white liquid came out of it. I managed to pull the door closed before D1020 came at me again, but another officer had to lock the door, because I couldn’t reach my keys. That was the end of the incident. I had reddening and marking on my arm and a small scratch on my face (photos are attached as [INN000021]). I was halfway through completing a use of force report that afternoon, when Juls Williams informed me that I was being suspended pending an investigation as another detainee, D3791, had made a complaint. I was escorted out of the centre. D1020 was asked if he wanted to make a complaint, but he did not want to.

128. The Inquiry has provided me with documents [CJS000651, HOM002190 row 14] which contain entries relating to the incident. The complaint by D3791 was that I should have turned my camera on as I ‘should have known what D1020 was like’

and that I had my hand around D1020's throat. At no point did I ever place my hands around D1020's neck or throat.

129. On 8 November 2017, I was invited to an investigation interview on 10 November with Sarah Newland, who was conducting the investigation [CJS007299]. I attended the interview and recall that it lasted about an hour. Following a two- to three-month suspension, I was informed of the outcome of the investigation, that the complaint was unsubstantiated. DCO Evans had witnessed the incident and supported my statement that the detainee was trying to attack me. Document CJS000651 records: "*Whilst the DCM did push the other detainee away from his person on a number of occasions, this was to prevent injury to himself, but there was no evidence to suggest he had his hand around that person's throat at any point*". I am not sure how I was told about the outcome, but I had one or two phone calls from the centre while I was suspended. I returned to work at Brook House in December, still as acting DCM, but as I mentioned at paragraph 27 above, I handed in my notice shortly afterwards.

Individual Welfare

130. I do not recall receiving any specific training around the mental health of detainees. I think that training for staff to help manage mental health and mental illness would have been very helpful. It would have allowed us to recognise the signs when we were engaging with detainees. We managed detainees' mental health by observing and speaking to them and to their friends. If any concerns arose, we made the healthcare team aware. Healthcare staff were available for detainees with mental health issues and detainees would be able to have a mental health assessment by a doctor.

131. Somehow drugs, such as cannabis and spice, managed to get into the centre and onto the wings. The policies in place do not appear to have prevented drugs coming in by various means. Detainees who were taking illegal drugs would cause issues with other detainees, by becoming violent or aggressive. This caused problems for

officers and healthcare staff when the detainees needed medical attention, as it would divert people away from other duties (e.g., if a first response was called and officers from the different wings had to stop what they were doing to attend the incident). The level of drugs within Brook House made the job a lot harder.

132. Brook House had a company called Forward Trust working Monday to Friday within the site, offering drug support and advice to detainees who required help with their addictions or the use of drugs. I think the work of Forward Trust was effective to help out people who were there temporarily. I used to hear positive comments from various individuals that would mention it.

133. Chaplaincy was available at Brook House every day and if the chaplain had any concerns about an individual, I think they would normally bring it to the attention of an officer or manager on the individual's wing. I cannot remember anything specific but if chaplaincy advised me of any issues, and depending on the matter, I would speak to the individual to try to help them, or, if I had concerns, I would have flagged it up with my DCM and/or healthcare. If needed, we may have started an ACDT.

134. Individuals who self-harmed, or said they were depressed or wanted to hurt themselves, were seen by healthcare, spoken to in a review and were placed on an ACDT, or even on constant watch. We would help people arrange healthcare appointments, as healthcare had their list of people that needed assistance. If the situation was critical, we would make sure they were seen. After a detainee on an ACDT was reviewed a number of times, the individual would either be removed from the ACDT, or they would remain on it, depending on the outcome of the reviews. The purpose of the review was to make sure the individual was safe and not harming themselves. Reviews were also a way to provide support and help to the individual, and to allow them to raise any other concerns. We were always observing people within the centre, how they spoke, their demeanour and body language. You learned little things about people every day and you could assess how they were dealing with things. If I was concerned about someone, I would raise

an ACDT. I am not sure if the process differed from the policy, but the process seemed to work quite well.

135. If individuals refused to eat or if they did not collect food for two to three days, it would be raised with the wing DCM, Oscar 1, healthcare and senior management. Lunch and dinner were selected by individuals the day before. The individual would be ticked off at mealtimes when they had collected their food from the servery and we would also try to observe them eating. I believe if a detained person had not gone down for breakfast, lunch or dinner, for two days, they would be put on an ACDT. There would be observations on their eating and drinking, and DCOs would have a conversation with the detainee. Some individuals would skip their meals from the servery, but they would buy and eat food from the shop. I recall incidents when detained persons would make out that they were on hunger strike because of an upcoming flight, but they would ask someone else to buy food for them, so it didn't show up on their account which we could check. If a detainee was observed eating or drinking, it would be recorded within the ACDT. The process seemed to work. I believe the process reflected the policy.

136. When I became acting DCM, I was primary case manager or second case manager for detained persons who were on ACDT. I cannot now remember how cases were assigned. I believe the responsibility of case managers was to carry out reviews as and when required (this was stated on the ACDT booklet), and to discuss the review with healthcare to decide on any further observations required. I did not receive any training for this role, aside from shadowing other DCMs as they carried out a review. I think the healthcare team would usually be present at an ACDT review, but not always (presumably due to their own workloads or possibly because of a lack of staff). If they were present, they would help to make the decision on the frequency of observations and conversations with the detained person, or to consider closing the ACDT, depending on how the detainee was responding.

137. The Inquiry has provided me with the ACDT review for D178 [CJS003206] and asks about the purpose of attendance by a member of staff from the detained

person's wing. As far as I recall, the purpose of a wing officer, from the wing where the detainee was resident, being at an ACDT review, was to help to make a decision on the review because that officer would spend more time with the detainee, see them more often, and have a rapport with them. It was often helpful for the individual to have someone who they knew with them during the review. I do not recall contributing to D178's case review, but generally if required, I might say something on the individual's behalf about how they were on the wing or in the centre, or I might just observe the review taking place. If there was something important to say, I would bring it up in the review. I cannot recall attending specific training for attending case reviews. I feel that officers would have benefitted from training, as it would have helped us to better understand the process and how the reviews could help the individual.

Detained Persons as time served foreign national offenders (TSFNO)

138. I did not work on reception for TSFNO individuals detained at Brook House.

139. I treated all detained persons in the same way, so that they could see I was treating them as equally as non-TSFNO individuals. Some detained persons were very violent, aggressive and would like to intimidate staff or threaten us. It was difficult to deal with them at times. Detainees who had come from prison had different behaviour – they were not necessarily all troublesome, but some people coming from prison came with a different attitude. They had more experience in detention and would often push the boundaries with staff. There could also be issues with detainees who were ordinarily calm, reasonable, and polite, but they could cause a problem if, for example, they heard some bad news. Individuals' backgrounds did not bother me; once they were at Brook House, I would help them if I could.

140. In my opinion, housing TSFNO's with other detained people should not happen. They should remain in a centre or prison just for TSFNO's. Some of the TSFNO's had committed serious crimes. Their behaviour when they were violent, aggressive,

or trying to intimidating others, changed the atmosphere of the centre. I think a lot of detainees felt scared or intimidated being in that environment.

Attitudes towards Individuals Detained at Brook House

141. I did not have any specific concerns about verbal or physical abuse of detained persons by staff. I do not remember witnessing any treatment of this kind. I did not have any concerns about abuse of detained persons by other detained persons.

5 June 2017

142. The Inquiry has asked me about an incident on 5 June 2017 when I was present in the B wing office at around 08:30am when a Congolese detained person was allegedly being verbally abusive, demanding new boxers and socks. It is alleged that I lost my temper and started to shout back at the detained person. The Inquiry has provided the following documents: CPS000025, KENCOV1030 V201706050003, KENCOV1030 V201706050004, TRN0000063.

143. I do not recollect this incident, but I have reviewed the documents to assist my recollection. The documents indicate that this incident took place at 08:45am, first thing in the morning. The detainee involved had demanded new boxers, even though he had been given a full set of clothing, because his clothing was in the laundry. This request was properly refused by the officers, and the detainee became abusive and very rude. He started swearing at the officers and refused to leave without clothing [TRN0000063]. The transcript, which starts in the middle of the incident, shows me saying the following [KENCOV1030 V201706050003]:

7 **Unknown Detainee:** You are actually sick –
8 **Darren Thomsett:** I know, mate, the day I am fucking worried about you, so I might as well
9 pack it in [inaudible] do one.
10 **Unknown Detainee:** All right, all right. All right, big man. All right, big man.
11 **Darren Thomsett:** Yeah.
12 **Unknown Detainee:** You get me.
13 **Darren Thomsett:** Yeah, absolutely.
14 **Unknown Detainee:** All right, big man.
15 **Darren Thomsett:** Just come in here, giving it all that, what is the matter with you?
16 **Unknown Detainee:** I don't care, bro.
17 **Darren Thomsett:** Well fucking do it on your own then. I don't want to do it, stop whining.
18 **Unknown Detainee:** Well if you don't like it, don't come here, innit.
19 **Darren Thomsett:** Well I don't – you're whining like a fucking girl.
20 **Unknown Detainee:** I can't hear you.
21 **Darren Thomsett:** It's dumb, innit? Moaning. Man up.
22 **Unknown Detainee:** Well it's all you all do. You chat to me all shit, bro, you get me?
23 **Darren Thomsett:** Well, you are the one that is doing it.
24 **Unknown Detainee:** [Inaudible]. I don't get into arguments. It's you lot that's doing it -
25 **Darren Thomsett:** That is because I don't listen to your fucking bollocks.
26 **Unknown Detainee:** Prick. Fucking racist price. Look at you, you look like some EDL guy.
27 Fucking dickhead. Racist prick. Shut up man. You get me? Fucking prick.
28 **Male Officer 1:** Where is the racism coming in?
29 **Unknown Detainee:** He is. He is a fucking [inaudible] prick.

144. From the transcript, it appears that I was frustrated with the abuse coming from the detainee. Callum Tulley appears to have reported that I lost my temper and started shouting [CPS000025, p.30]. It is possible that I shouted, but I am waiting to view the video footage of this incident, so it is difficult to say. If the detainee was shouting, it may have been necessary to speak at a level that he could hear me. Callum Tulley recorded that I said, 'if you want to have a go lets go'; however, the transcript does not show that I used this language. Callum Tulley states that I walked away from the situation, and it deescalated [TRN0000063]. If I have any further comments on reviewing the video footage, I will provide these to the Inquiry.

145. It appears that Callum Tulley believed that although the detained person was being very abusive, there was no threat of actual violence [CPS000025, p.30 and TRN0000063]. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on this assessment, which in my view is not relevant. The detainee obviously said something threatening as I responded that I wasn't worried about him. It was impossible to know whether a situation could become violent. As I mentioned at paragraph 14 above, it was important to stand your ground with detainees who were abusive and threatening, as it had a significant impact on the environment in the centre, on other detainees

and on the staff. I regularly received threats to mine and my family's lives and I suffered constant verbal abuse on an almost daily basis because I was doing my job. I was there to try to help and assist new detainees coming into the centre, and it was not appropriate for people to come into the office being abusive, threatening and making demands.

146. With hindsight, I regret becoming frustrated. It was my responsibility to be professional and I should have held my tongue. It is unpleasant to see that I used this language – telling the detainee that he was ‘whining like a fucking girl’ and calling him a ‘cunt’ to officers. I accept that it is not appropriate, but it was said in the heat of the moment following abuse from a detained person so early in the morning. I did not go into Brook House to try to upset people, to the contrary I tried to help detained persons as best I could. It frustrated me when people seemed to want to spend time arguing. This detainee had been given what he was entitled to, but yet he was shouting at me to have more and calling me racist.

147. Callum Tulley said that I had a short fuse, but this is not accurate. I believe that I tolerated a significant amount of stress and pressure at Brook House. Sometimes it was necessary to deal with the situation in front of you rather than going around in circles, and sometimes I lost my patience. The Inquiry has asked me about the comments made by Callum Tulley that I took stress out on detained persons, that I jumped at the opportunity to get involved in a conflict and that I spilled over into unprofessionalism sometimes [TRN0000063]. I do not agree that I took stress out on detained persons or that I jumped at the opportunity to get involved in a conflict. I tried to deal with situations as they arose, as best I could. This might have involved standing up to people and being direct. However, I accept that on this occasion, some of the comments I made were unprofessional and with hindsight I should have chosen more appropriate language.

148. The Inquiry has also asked me about comments made about me by three officers, Callum Tulley, Dan Lake and Dan Small [KENCOV1030 V201706050019]. At the outset, I consider this conversation completely inappropriate and offensive. I do not

agree with their comments that I went 'nuts', was 'extreme', a 'fucking nutter', had 'completely lost the plot' or that I would wind up detained people. I have set out in detail in this statement the approach that I tried to take to the DCO role. It is noteworthy that these officers made these comments behind my back, and no-one ever raised issues with me. If there was a concern, they should have raised it with senior management. Dan Small states that I said to a detained person 'do you want to fucking kiss me'. I do not remember saying this.

149. It appears from the documents provided by the Inquiry that I discussed the incident with the Congolese detainee with Callum Tulley the next day (6 June 2017) and that I recounted some of the discussion with him [KENCOV1031 V2017060600007]. The Inquiry has asked me why I said, 'well fucking stop getting detained'. Although this was not recorded in the transcript of the discussion with the detainee [KENCOV1030 V2017060500003], it seems that I said this or something like it. I meant that the detainee should sort himself out and get his immigration case sorted. This was something that I often said to detainees. I am waiting to view the video footage of this incident, and if I have any further comments, I will provide them to the Inquiry.

150. The Inquiry has asked me further questions about the comments made in this transcript [KENCOV1031 V2017060600007]. They asked why I told a detained person to 'fuck off' and why I wouldn't take him through to make phone calls from the office. I don't think that I told a detainee to 'fuck off', although I may provide further comments once I have reviewed the video footage. The transcript indicates that I was talking to Callum Tulley and told him that the previous day a detainee had demanded to be taken to the office so he could make phone calls. The transcript records: "*I said no. Then he's coming here trying it again today. No. Fuck off.*" I would not tell a detainee to fuck off and it seems that I was making a general comment to Callum Tulley about my views on the request.

151. The office phones were not for use by detained persons (they were not supposed to come behind the office counter). They all had mobile phones that they could top

up with credit if they needed to make a call. Occasionally, we allowed detainees to use the office phone to access interpreters, or perhaps, if they were at risk of self-harm, we would allow them to call their family to try to alleviate the situation. But office phones were not generally for detainees' use as they wanted.

152. The Inquiry has also asked why I said that detained people were 'all drug users', and said to a detained person on spice, 'fucking look at you' [KENCOV1031 V2017060600007]. I am waiting for the video footage of this discussion, and I will provide further comment to the Inquiry once I have reviewed it. I do not believe that I said all detained people were drug users, but that I was referring to a selection of detainees on the B wing board. In the transcript, I told Callum Tulley about a detainee who had come on to B wing because his room was being repaired, and within ten minutes of being on the wing, he had taken drugs and couldn't speak. I apparently said to the detainee, 'what's the matter with you man?' and 'mate ... fucking look at you' or something similar. I believe that I would have made these comments out of concern about the detainee's drug use, and I encouraged him to go and eat something. I do not consider that this was inappropriate behaviour. I have outlined above the impact that drugs had on the centre environment, on the detainees' wellbeing and on staff. It is clear from the transcript that I was frustrated and trying to run the induction wing well so that new detainees picked up good habits. I was concerned about drug use, and I said, 'Fuck me. Drugs. Wanker, drugs'. I then go on to point out on the board, the detainees who were using drugs and I counted eight people on B wing. This footage was shown on Panorama.

153. The Inquiry has provided me with further comments made about me by Callum Tulley to an unnamed male officer [KENCOV1036 V2017061500020]. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on the suggestion that I was 'not always fair', that I got 'carried away', and that I needed to know how to keep my cool. The transcript records Callum Tulley saying that I was good and a very efficient officer. He described me as firm but fair, and then said "*well, not always fair. ... But he is, most of the time you see him, he's fair*". He also commented that it seemed I wanted the best for the centre, which was true. My approach was to be fair to all detainees and

to try to help them if I could. I do not agree that I got carried away, or that I would 'miss the confrontation'. I did not enjoy confrontation.

11 June 2017

154. I have been provided with a video [KENCOV1034 V2017061100009] showing a discussion with Callum Tulley on 11 June 2017. The Inquiry states that "*DCO Callum Tulley notified you that the detained person in room 104 had been shouting that he wanted a shower. When DCO Tulley tells you that you should move, you reply that the bell system hasn't been working for a while. Later, you described detained persons generally as 'all off their nut'.*"

155. I have reviewed the footage. Callum Tulley notified me that the detainee wanted a shower, but he did not tell me that I 'should move'. I said that the detainee needed to come up to the office and to bring his things. Callum Tulley said that the detainee could press his bell, and "[I] don't think you've got to move". I replied that the bell hadn't been working for a while. Having looked at the video, it is quite clear that the intercom was working on that occasion, and I was able to tell the detainee to come up for his shower. I tell Callum Tulley they were "*all off their nut*", and I meant that detainees were high on drugs. Callum Tulley asks about a particular detainee taking spice.

156. I am asked a series of questions about the broken bell system. I do not recall why or for how long the bell system was not working. I did room checks every day when I was on duty, and if there was an issue with the intercom system, I would report it to maintenance so that it could be fixed. I cannot recall for how long it was broken (if it was); it may be that the maintenance team at Brook House will have a record that could assist the Inquiry. A broken intercom system could impact any wing, and staff on the wings would need to report it. I am asked whether the failure of the bell system resulted in any operational difficulties that impacted on the care provided to detained persons or the ability of staff to carry out their duties. Even if the intercom system stopped, we were still able to carry out our duties and care for

detained persons. As is shown on the video, the detained person was able to walk to the office and I went to assist him. There were also red indicator lights on the wing outside the rooms that would light up when the button or intercom in the room was pressed and it would get the attention of the wing officers. All officers had a key fob which we would use to test the intercom panels during LBBs and ACDT checks. The fob checks were recorded by the security team within the centre and were used to monitor that a detainee had been checked on, which was necessary for ACDT observations.

157. The Inquiry has asked about the appropriateness of my conduct following the request by DCO Tulley. I do not believe that my conduct was inappropriate. Detainees were free to have a shower any time they wished during association/unlock. I would sometimes take people to the shower on A wing, if they needed assistance, or if they had mobility difficulties. If someone wanted a shower and needed help, they could come to the office to ask for assistance, speak to an officer on the wing, or use the intercom.

158. After the brief discussion with Callum Tulley in the wing office, the video shows me leaving the office and then escorting the detainee, who was using crutches, to A wing to take a shower. In response to Callum Tulley telling the detainee that I was 'a nice officer', the detainee replied, 'I know, he's the best'.

19 June 2017 – D693

159. The Inquiry has provided me with an SIR submitted by DCO Milburn on 19 June 2017 [CJS005420]. The SIR records that D693 was due to be transferred to HMP Bristol but he claimed to have a blade in his mouth, so the Tascor escorts refused to take him. He came into the B wing office later that day asking why there was no money on his shop card, and DCO Milburn informed him it was because of his expected move back to prison, and his account would need to be reopened. D693 began to shout and get angry, slamming his hands on the counter in the office. DCO Milburn records that I escorted D693 out of the office and we both agreed

afterwards that we could smell alcohol from him. D693 claimed “*he could not wait to return back to Somalia, so he could then return to the UK and kill every single British person*”.

160. This kind of incident was common at Brook House. As discussed already, I experienced verbal and physical threats on an almost daily basis. I have been assaulted on duty, with threats to myself and my family that detainees would send people on the outside to find us. I did not receive any training to deal with these threats, except to fill out an SIR. In a situation like this, where threats were made by the detained person towards staff, it would not have been appropriate to use force to manage the situation.

161. The Inquiry has provided me with the transcript of a conversation in which I discuss D693 [KENCOV1037 V2017061900003]. I do not remember this conversation, but I have reviewed the transcript. In conversation with Callum Tulley and another officer, I describe D693 as a ‘horrible bastard’. I do not now recall D693, but it is likely that I meant he was an aggressive, volatile, and abusive person in the centre. Callum Tulley and the other officer commented on D693’s criminal history earlier in the transcript although the details have been redacted by the Inquiry, and I responded that it was ‘pretty grim’.

162. In the transcript, I describe the detainee as asking for a row (‘he put his chin out hoping we’d knock him out’), and my response being that if he threw the first punch, I would ‘put [him] out of [his] misery’. I would never threaten a detainee, although I would have stood my ground if a detainee was verbally or physically abusive. Some people were always looking for a way to bully or intimidate staff. I cannot remember the details of this incident. I am waiting to view the video footage of this incident, and if I have any further comments, I will provide them to the Inquiry.

163. The Inquiry has asked me about a comment I made later in this transcript [KENCOV1037 V2017061900007], when I expressed the view that detained persons came to England illegally because they did not have an ‘amazing benefits

system' in their home country. I do not recall this conversation, although I was aware that some people came to the UK because of the benefits system here, so they could send money back to their own countries. Some detained people told me they did this and that it happened.

164. The Inquiry has asked whether this view affected the way I carried out my duties at Brook House. These views did not affect me in my role at all. I go on to say at the end of the transcript: 'I'm not really that bothered. You know, if people come – want to come and live here, so be it'.

Complaints

165. I believe that if a complaint was handed in by a detained person, their complaint would be logged, the Home Office was made aware, and a manager was assigned to investigate and deal with the complaint. Detainees were able to make a complaint about anything. If a staff member put in a grievance, I think HR was involved and a manager/senior manager was assigned to deal with it until it was resolved.

166. As I mentioned, a number of complaints were made against me by detainees. I did not know that a complaint had been made until a manager or DCM Edwards spoke to me about it. I would give my account to the investigating manager.

167. The Inquiry has provided me with document [HOM002190] which is a spreadsheet containing the details of complaints that were made, where I was identified as a member of staff linked to the complaint. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on 13 complaints contained within this document as well as providing additional documents in respect of some of the complaints made in 2017. At this point in time, I do not have an independent memory of most of the incidents, but where I am able to provide further comment, I have done so.

13 October 2015 – D1985

168. D1985 alleged that he was being abused and threatened by me, and that I treated ‘detainees like the worst scum on earth’ [HOM002190 row 2]. He claimed that he was traumatised, required counselling, and requested Home Office release on compassionate grounds. He organised a petition signed by seven other detainees. The complaint was originally referred to PSU but was returned to G4S as minor misconduct. The complaint was investigated and found to be unsubstantiated. The majority of the residents mentioned in the complaint had no issues and did not want to pursue the matter. Others said there was no issue, and I was ‘just doing [my] job’. No specific incidents of my behaviour were described and D1985 admitted that he had been using abusive language.

5 February 2016 – D4277

169. D4277’s complaint was that when he went to play pool on A wing (because he was stressed and his only friend was on A wing), I was racist and told him to go back to his own country [HOM002190 row 3]. D4277 said that I ‘did not have the balls to say that in front of a manager’, and I claimed to say that I was a manager. The complaint was investigated by G4S and found to be unsubstantiated. I was interviewed as part of the investigation and said that when I was doing my rounds on the wing, I asked D4277 to leave because he was not a resident and should not have been there. D4277 had already been given several warnings about going on to A wing when he was not a resident, and he had tampered with his ID card. He left the wing, but only after saying something at the door of the wing, and he appeared to make a hand gesture to his private area, which may have been where the comment about having ‘no balls’ came from. I would never have said to a detained person that they should go back to their own country.

15 March 2016 – D4092

170. D4092's complaint was that I provided him with an envelope that should have contained money and letters to his solicitor, but while it had the paperwork, there was no money. He claimed that the money was taken from the post box or by a member of staff [HOM002190 row 4]. D4092 and I both confirmed to the investigation that the envelope was sealed when I gave it to D4092, which confirmed that nothing was taken from it before it was given to him. D4092 was advised to contact the person sending him the letter or Royal Mail, and he was provided with suggestions on how best to receive money (e.g., by trackable post, a visit or by named postal order). The complaint was found to be unsubstantiated.

27 September 2016 – D4049

171. D4049's complaint was that when he was using the fax machine on B wing, my behaviour was not appropriate or suitable, that it was awkward and stand-offish, becoming uncomfortable and confrontational [HOM002190 row 5]. He said that I asked him questions in an argumentative tone, that I made a racist comment and that I swore at him. The complaint was investigated, and CCTV footage showed that I walked by D4049 on several occasions, and made conversation with him, but there was no evidence that I was rude to him. One witness from the chaplaincy team observed a heated conversation but she did not hear what was said, and a detainee who was present throughout said that he hadn't heard anything being said. I did not make the comment suggested, although I did ask D4049 what he was looking at because he kept looking at me, and I was trying to hurry him up in sending his fax. D4049 had said that he was told by a member of A wing staff to use the fax machine on B wing because their fax machine was not working; however, the Residential Manager confirmed to the investigation that all fax machines were working on all residential wings. It seems that the detainee was given a warning for making a false allegation. The complaint was found to be unsubstantiated. Although I do not remember this incident, it is likely that I recognised that D4049 was not meant to

be on B wing, and I was trying to hurry him up to finish sending his fax so he could leave the wing. I would not have made a racist comment to a detainee.

4 October 2016 – D4278

172. D4278's complaint was that I was rude, irresponsible and not friendly, and that I had no manners and he wanted me to be 'taught some manners' [HOM002190 row 6]. When he was spoken to during the investigation, D4278 claimed that I 'did not open the door in a polite manner & that [I] was not always smiling'. He asked to withdraw his complaint as he had since moved wings and said there were no further issues between him and me. I was nevertheless spoken to by the investigating manager and said that I could only recall one discussion with D4278 which was a separate incident.

5 January 2017 – D3534

173. D3534's complaint was that his gym clothes worth £55 had been moved and he could not find them [HOM002190 row 7]. D3534 had hung his gym clothes on the railing outside his room. CCTV footage showed that I picked up his clothes and towels from the railing, and put his clothes in a bag, which I passed to another officer to put in the A wing office. The officer noted that the bag was still in the office a few days later; however, it went missing. Although I acted appropriately by removing the clothing from the railings, the complaint was found to be substantiated because the property had gone missing. D3534 was reimbursed £30 for his missing property. This was the only complaint against me, which was found to have been substantiated, even though I had acted properly. Detainees knew that they should not leave clothes, shoes or other items outside their rooms because it was a possible fire and trip hazard. This issue could have been avoided had D3534 kept his property in his room.

174. The Inquiry has provided me with details of a complaint made by D381 on 6 June 2017. His complaint claimed that I had promised to note in his records that he had assisted a disabled detainee to take a shower, but I did not do so, that I had promised to get clothing for the disabled detainee, but I did not do so, that I discriminated against black or Caribbean detained persons, and that I behaved aggressively and was cocky, particularly when D381 asked for a curtain on 1 June [CJS001443, HOM002190 row 9]. It was also said that on 3 March 2017 I was angry towards D381 and five other detainees and said that it was too early for them to make requests at 08:10am. The complaint was signed by a small number of other detainees.

175. The complaint was investigated by Conway Edwards, the Race Relations and Diversity Manager [CJS001400], and I was interviewed as part of the investigation [pp. 3-10]. I did not recall having a conversation with D381 about recording in his records that he assisted another detainee. It should have been recorded that the disabled detainee had been taken for a shower, and if a request was made for clothing, I am sure I would have gotten them. I did not discriminate against black or Caribbean detainees. I challenged D381 because he was a Diversity Orderly, but he did not wear his top or carry the multi-wing ID card as he was required to do when carrying out Diversity duties on other wings. Diversity orderlies had duties assisting detainees, for example if they needed assistance accessing the shower or using the fax machine. They would sometimes manage a queue or direct detainees on where to find information about Home Office requests or applying for destitute clothing. Diversity orderlies had access to other wings (which was not normally allowed) but only when they were genuinely carrying out their duties. I did not recall the incident on 3 March, but at 08:10am, I would have told detainees to go get their breakfast first and then come back to the office. It was natural that they would have questions. I do not recall the incident with D381 on 1 June, although I told Conway Edwards that there were no curtains on B wing, and I told D381 to go back to his own wing to ask for one. I am not sure why he was making this request

of B wing staff as he was not resident on the wing, and it appears that I issued him with a warning over this incident [CJS001443, p. 9].

176. Conway Edwards spoke to some of the other detainees who were mentioned in the complaint and *“they did not seem to have any major issues with the officer”* [HOM002190 row 9]. He found that the complaint was unsubstantiated. He went through each element of his complaint and provided his reasons why the complaint was not upheld, including the points I had raised during the interview [CJS001443, pp. 8-11]. I have no further observations to make.

28 June 2017 – D1538

177. I have been provided with documents CJS001619, CJS00348 and HOM002190 row 12, regarding a complaint made by D1538. D1538 alleged that on 28 June 2017, he attempted to go to C wing where another detainee had offered to provide him with clothes as he had only a t-shirt and some shorts like ‘boxers’ to wear. He said he had no other clothes to wear for the 26 days he had been at Brook House. D1538 complained that a detention centre officer told him he was not allowed to go on to C wing and that he needed to change his clothes as he ‘looked gay’. He also said that the officer ‘pushed him out. ... he was pushed out and his head was put down’. I was identified as the DCO involved in this incident.

178. I do not recall this incident specifically. Having reviewed the documents it appears that D1538 was trying to get on to C wing without authorisation when he was resident on another wing and that he was verbally abusive towards me. I issued a warning to D1538 and made an entry on the electronic system [CJS001403] which records [p.32]:

“28/06/2017 18:25 tomsettd

*Details: 1st written warning given for unauthorised access onto C wing and being verbally abusive towards an officer. *** By: tomsettd on 28/06/17 18:26***”*

179. I would never say that a detainee looked or was gay, or that he should change his clothes because he looked gay. I did not push him or put his head down. I refused him entry to C wing as he was not resident on that wing and centre rules were clear that individuals were not allowed on wings where they were not resident. It is unfortunate that another officer in E wing indicated to D1538 that it was acceptable for him to go to C wing when it was not allowed. It meant that I endured verbal abuse from D1538, and he was issued with a written warning for his behaviour.

180. The complaint was investigated internally before being referred to the Home Office PSU team. The PSU investigation report [CJS003348] includes reference to my explanation [at 6.7.4]:

“he did not make any reference to Mr D1538 clothes and if anything he would have told him to put a request if he had been told he was there to pick up clothes from someone because we issue clothes to individuals who do not have anything other than what they are wearing.”

181. The PSU investigation report confirmed that D1538 was issued with a full set of destitute clothing at his induction and that he had other clothes which were listed on a room clearance record from 3 June 2017. CCTV showed that he had other clothes beyond what was described in the complaint. His reason for wanting to gain entry to the wing was in doubt. The PSU concluded [at 7.3.17 and 7.3.20]:

“Whilst it is accepted that the question of homophobic comments being made to Mr D1538 cannot be resolved beyond any doubt, it is considered on the balance of probability that such comments were probably not made and that Mr D1538 became frustrated due to this attempt to enter C wing being challenged and denied.

...

In consideration of all available evidence, it is considered, on the balance of probability, that Mr D1538's second allegation is found to be unsubstantiated."

29 June 2017 and 24 August 2017 – D668

182. The Inquiry has provided me with details of the allegations made against me by D668 [HOM002543 and HOM002539]. D668 alleges that on 29 June 2017, I went to his room and told him to 'take [his] stuff and get out' in a rude manner that shocked him. He also said that on 24 August 2017, when he went for a visit with his brother, I asked him rudely to 'come here' and I frisked him roughly, 'not gentle'. He asked me what I was doing, and I told him to 'shut up' and that I was doing my job. In his view, the way I conducted the search was not 'nicely like other officers', and he felt intimidated and humiliated. He said that I was racist.

183. I was notified of this complaint by the PSU on 22 December 2017 [INN000022]. On 29 January 2018, I was interviewed by the investigating officer at the PSU [HOM002547]. By this point, I was no longer employed by G4S, but I willingly participated in the meeting. I told the investigator that I could not remember D668 at all. In relation to the incident on 29 June, I told the investigator that I would not have spoken to D668 in the way that he has suggested, but I would have asked him to go to reception after he had packed his things. The note of interview recorded the following:

"In response to Mr D668 saying everybody knows Darren Tomsett is a racist and he had been nervous when he saw you in visits, Mr Tomsett said he had been accused of being racist a number of times. He was told this was because he was doing his job. He had never been racist and certainly not in the centre. He was not happy Mr D668 had accused him of being racist. He was doing his job and sometimes detainees did not like the answers he gave them. It was a stressful, tiring environment and detainees could get upset and agitated quickly. ... Around the centre he

could be speaking to a detainee who does not like what he is being told about rules and procedures and calls him a racist. He said 'it is a loose term that is thrown around in there' by detainees against staff."

184. I explained to the investigator how I would approach a pat down search which was required before a detained person went into visits or returned to the centre: "...a pat down search would entail a run across the outline of the arms and run down the side of the torso and then the legs and when the person turns round and I used the back of my hands down the back and across the buttocks and down the back of the legs. You cover all areas not just pat certain areas". I never squeezed any person that I searched, but it was necessary to have contact with the person's body in conducting a search in order to check for concealed items. I conducted the search in the same manner that I would have done on anyone, which was reasonably firm but not too soft as we were looking for possible contraband. I would never have told a detained person to 'shut up', although I would have said that I was doing my job.

185. I stand by the account that I gave to the investigator. I have no additional comments to make about the incident, save to say that sometimes language barriers meant that people could misconstrue what was said.

186. The investigator found that both allegations against me were unsubstantiated, and she found that I was neither rude nor racist [HOM002748, at 7.4.9 and 7.4.15]. In reaching her findings, she referred to the comments of Nurse Sihlali at Brook House, who was the recipient of racist abuse from detainees. She said: "*they use the word for effect. If staff say no then the detainee calls them racist. This word is used to get what they want. Young officers would often give what the person wanted so they are not called racist*" [at 7.4.8]. The investigator doubted that I would have been on visits on 24 August 2017, because I was acting DCM by this point and had extensive responsibilities [at 7.4.10]. Nevertheless, based on the evidence, the search as I described it to her, was not inappropriate. The investigator noted in her report D668's "*dislike of being asked to submit to a search as [she] witnessed this first hand when [she] interviewed him at Lunar House*" [at 7.4.15].

187. The Inquiry has provided me with the transcript of D668's evidence to the Inquiry. He states that the investigator told him she had received a lot of complaints about me and that I had been 'sacked because of [my] wrongdoing to detainees' [Day 10, p. 88]. I find this suggestion highly unlikely, and it is, in any event, not accurate. On the date that D668 was interviewed by PSU (20 December 2017), I was still a member of staff at Brook House. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on the suggestion that I was aggressive in telling D668 to pack his stuff and get out [Day 10, pp. 90-91]. I have addressed this point at paragraph 183 above. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on the suggestion that I was racist and that I behaved differently towards black people and white people [Day 10, pp. 91-92]. I have never been racist, and I do not treat people differently. As far as I was able, I tried to help people who were detained at Brook House regardless of where they were from. D668 was unable to point to any evidence for this offensive and prejudicial allegation.

7 July 2017 – D1399

188. The Inquiry has provided details of a complaint made by D1399 regarding a request for a curtain for the window of his room and a curtain for the toilet area. D1399 claimed that I was aggressive, that I told him I would change his wing, and that I would make his life difficult [CJS001480, HOM002190 row 11]. I do not recall this incident, but DCM Nathan Ring responded to the complaint, and included my comments within his response. I explained to D1399 that there were no curtains available on B wing, but that he would be relocating to the general population on another wing later that day, and hopefully his new room would have curtains in it. D1399 was not happy with this response at the time, but he apologised to me later that day for how he had spoken to me and his behaviour. His apology was witnessed by another officer and his complaint was found to be unsubstantiated.

189. This account appears to be accurate. Often detainees would steal curtains from the induction wing and take them to other wings, either to use as a curtain or as a

mat on the floor. I would never have said to a detainee that I would 'make his life difficult', and this threat, particularly in the context of someone who was moving off the wing that day, was absurd. I sympathise with the predicament of someone not having a curtain, but his claims about my behaviour were completely untrue. As I mentioned, he apologised to me later in the day for his behaviour.

16 December 2017 – D130

190. Rows 16 and 17 of HOM002190 contains details of an allegation made by D130 that on 16 December 2017, I and Sara Edwards repeatedly mentioned D130's name, and that on 18 December, Conway Edwards said his name provocatively and repeatedly mentioned his name. D130 apparently wished to be addressed as 'Sir'. He claimed that Sara Edwards, Conway Edwards and I were 'leading the harassment and bullying' against him. He made a number of allegations about sexual harassment by officers and detainees, including an allegation that another detainee was pulling at his penis at the microwave, that I grabbed my private parts in front of him when tucking my shirt into my trousers, that another officer was playing with his keys around his penis, and that a female manager was stroking her thighs and looking at him.

191. This complaint was found to be unsubstantiated. I provided my response by email to Lynn Harthill, who was the investigating manager [INN000023]. I had explained to D130 that he was required to move out of E wing to B wing, as E wing was short of space. D130 became loud, abusive, and argumentative and said that he wasn't going. I tried explaining why he had to move off the wing, but he wasn't listening to me. I may have mentioned his name two or three times because he was arguing with me, and I was trying to get him to pay attention to what I was saying. Later D130 left his room on E wing and made various accusations to me and to Sara Edwards, saying that he was going to make a complaint against us (although at the time I did not know what the reason was). I firmly deny that I grabbed my private parts, as he suggested. I tucked my shirt into the waistband of my trousers as I had

lost weight over time and needed to adjust my clothes. I was wearing a Body Worn Camera for both of my interactions with D130 which supported my account.

18 December 2017 – D356

192. D356's complaint related to a review of his detention on E wing. He claimed that I spoke to him on 16 December and told him his review would be the next day, but the next day he was told that it was scheduled for 20 December due to an ongoing investigation about assaulting an officer [HOM002190 row 15]. I have no memory of this complaint. It appears from the document that a review was conducted on 17 December, but D356 was not present. The conclusion of the review was that D356 should remain on E wing pending another review on 20 December. On 12 December, D356 had put two officers in a headlock during a C&R incident which was being investigated by PSU, as well as internally, and had been reported to West Sussex Police. There was also a possibility that D356's flight would be reset, which was another reason for him to remain on E wing. The investigating manager, Michelle Brown, found that it was not necessary for detainees on E wing to attend their E wing review and there was no process for feeding back to the detainee which may have created the perception that no review was conducted. The complaint was found to be unsubstantiated, but a recommendation was made to the Residential Manager to look at the process.

193. I have addressed in detail the Inquiry's questions regarding the complaints made against me, in part to demonstrate the absurdity of some of the allegations that were made: that I told a detainee to go back to his own country, that I did not open the door in a polite manner and I was not always smiling, that I told a detainee he looked gay and pushed him out the wing door putting his head down, that I frisked a detainee too roughly and told him to shut up, that I told a detainee I would make his life difficult, that I grabbed my private parts and repeatedly mentioned a detainee's name. I engaged with the investigation for each complaint and provided my account, even though all the allegations were completely false. I believe the volume of complaints that were made against me reflected the fact that I was trying to do a

good job, which sometimes involved refusing detainees' requests, which in turn generated complaints. As I said, I looked to treat all detainees fairly and with respect, and to observe the centre's rules.

Investigating complaints

194. When I was made acting DCM, I had responsibility for investigating complaints as the investigating officer. I did not receive training for dealing with complaints from detainees. The admin team sent me emails about the complaints, and I worked through them as best I could. I had access to the people who had made the complaints, so I would speak to them and to any officers involved and come to a conclusion based on what information was presented to me at the time (including CCTV footage if required). I cannot now recall whether I decided the complaint alone, or whether I reached my decision in discussion with senior management. The approach I took to investigating complaints is shown in my letter to D865 [CJS00155, at p. 22].

195. The Inquiry has asked me who was informed of the outcome of the investigation, other than the individual making the complaint. I cannot now recall who was informed about the outcome of the complaint. I cannot recall whether the investigating officer was informed if an appeal was lodged with the Prison and Probation Ombudsman, but I had no involvement in these appeals. I do not know if my investigations were reviewed by G4S or the Home Office.

Complaint from D3553

196. The Inquiry has asked me about a complaint by D3553 alleging that his request to access his mobile phone was refused by a member of staff, who said it was not her problem and she did not care [CJS001432]. From memory, DCM Povey was the investigating officer who conducted and concluded the investigation. I assisted DCM Povey by taking notes from the officers involved regarding what happened. One officer, Mike Fielding, described the member of staff's conduct as 'blunt and

disregarding' [at p.16]. I did not often observe this kind of behaviour; however, it could be that some officers were stressed and tired, and they lose the motivation to perform and work as well as you might normally expect. I note from the document that a solution had been proposed by the member of staff to D3553 a number of times, that he started to 'go off on one' and another detained person had to take him out of the office, and that it was a stressful, busy day.

197. Mike Fielding also commented on staff shortages within reception [at p.15]. As I have said at paragraphs 76 to 82 above, staff shortages were generally an issue at Brook House, whether due to sickness, staff leaving, annual leave or other reasons, such as staff on bed watches / observations, etc. Staff shortages meant that other officers had to do more work than was reasonable and would often be working with just one other officer when there should have been three or four on the wing.

198. I have no opinion on how the complaints process could be improved.

The Panorama Programme

199. I worked with Callum Tulley on a few occasions, when he attended the wing for inductions, for mealtimes, or for other reasons concerning his activities duties or other duties he may have had on the wing. He may have worked the odd shift or two as a wing officer with me, I'm not sure. Usually, he was an activities officer around the centre.

200. I appeared in the Panorama programme at the following timestamps:

- 8mins 40sec - 8mins 52 sec: I was shown pointing out detainees who either used or dealt drugs on the board in the B wing induction office. I counted eight detainees who were involved with drugs. The transcript of this video is at KENCOV1031 V2017060600007.

- 9mins 01 sec – 9mins 06 secs: I was shown standing in the B wing induction office with my back to the camera, and a detainee was saying to me in a raised voice, ‘Yeah what, yeah what’.
- 9min 12sec – 9mins 24secs: I was shown telling Callum Tulley that the previous evening after dinner, it was “*like the walking dead in here. Everyone was zombie out. All walking around. All stoned off their nut*”. I said that we were trying to run an induction wing, but none of the new people were “*picking up any good habits or decent habits*”. The transcript of this video is at KENCOV1031 V2017060600007.

201. I felt the Panorama programme may have had a negative impact on staff morale after seeing the film showing what it did. I was shocked when I saw the video. I could not believe that I was on it even though I was pixelated out. Seeing the Panorama programme made me think about whether Brook House was somewhere I wanted to work. It was part of the build-up to my leaving G4S, although it was my suspension in October 2017 that made me decide to leave.

202. I do not think that the Panorama programme had too much of an impact on the detained persons at Brook House.

203. As far as I am aware, I was not involved in any underage immigration detention cases, and I am not aware of the processes that are required to deal with them.

204. I cannot remember what changes, if any, were carried out after the programme, but in my opinion, G4S should have stopped TSFNO’s being housed at Brook House.

Specific Individuals

205. The Inquiry has asked me to comment on whether I worked with a number of specific individuals at Brook House. I occasionally worked with the following individuals as a DCO or as acting DCM: Nathan Ring, Steve Webb, Derck Murphy,

Dave Webb, Clayton Fraser, Charles Frances, Slim Bassoud, Dan Small, Yan Paschali, Dan Lake, Babatunde Fagbo, and Shayne Munro. To the best of my knowledge, I did not work with, or I do not remember working with, the following individuals: Calvin Sanders, John Connelly, Aaron Stokes, Mark Earl, Sean Sayers, Ryan Bromley, and Jo Buss. I worked more with Chris Donnelly than the other officers mentioned, when he was a DCM, and I was a DCO.

206. I did not witness any of these officers or managers verbally or physically abuse detainees, and I had no concerns about their behaviour. In my view, they appeared to work in a professional manner.

Suggestions for Improvements

207. I have no opinion on changes or improvements that could be made to Brook House, to improve individual health, safety, and welfare, save those that I have mentioned already (i.e., that there should be a grass area or field for the detainees, and TSFNOs should not be accommodated alongside non-TSFNOs).

Any Other Concerns

208. I have nothing to add about the culture of G4S at Brook House, or the treatment of individuals detained at Brook House.

Statement of Truth

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 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.

Name	Darren Tomsett
Signature	Signature
Date	18-02-2022