

*Confidential*

Independent Investigation into Brook House

Thursday, 15 February 2018

Interview with  
Paul Kempster  
Chief Operating Officer  
Custodial Services

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Investigators: Mr Ed Marsden (Verita)  
Ms Kate Lampard (Verita)

1. **Mr Marsden:** *[Introductions]* Paul, thank you very much. You confirmed you've had a letter, and let me just go back a step: as you will know only too well, the Board of G4S have asked us to undertake this independent investigation in the light of the *Panorama* programme, and that is with the agreement of the Home Office. We are now a fair way through interviewing people, so we've been in Brook House and seen the Senior Management Team, and interviewed operational managers, and at the moment talking to DCOs and the like. We come at this with a fairly good understanding of the institution, if not the mechanics of G4S and its operation more generally.
2. This is a discussion to get your evidence about some fairly specific issues that we want to discuss with you, so this is less general but more specific, and it may be that you would want to have another discussion with us if there are things you can't answer. The investigative process is informal, in the sense that we can't require anybody to come and talk to us, but most people have, and we're going to tape this, or record it digitally, and we will create a transcript for you to check, so in a week or so's time a professionally produced transcript will come through, password-protected. If you want to amend it, please do. The transcripts are confidential to us and you, we don't intend to attach them to the report, we don't intend to give them to G4S, under pain of death would we do so! Well, if a court ordered us to, we might.
3. We will undoubtedly quote people when it comes to using material in our report, because obviously we have to write a report for the Board. What we have said to more junior staff is, it's unlikely we would identify them by name, we might by job title, so, "A DCM told us", but people who are more senior, it's more likely we would identify by name, unless they specifically make a case as to why we shouldn't. If there are things that you would like to say to us during the course of the discussion that you want to treat particularly carefully, but want on the record, we are happy to take account of that. If you want to say something off the record, we are very happy to turn the recorder off, and actually, a lot of people have taken that opportunity, particularly talking to staff.
4. What we have said to all staff down at Brook House is, if they tell us something that we are really concerned about during the course of an interview - if someone's at risk, or there's been a fraud running in catering for

the last five years – we will have a duty to report that to the likes of you and to the likes of Jerry and Peter. We have no reason at the moment to think that we are going to be critical of anyone, but we will give that individual the opportunity to respond to any criticism before we make it. They will get the opportunity to see the draft report, either in its entirety, depending on their seniority, or if they were a member of staff at a more junior level, probably an extract, before we finalise any criticism and they get the opportunity to respond to the facts.

5. A final thing to say, we've said this to everybody at Brook House, I don't for one moment imagine they follow it, but we say it anyway and that is we have asked people not to discuss their interview with one another, so that we get to people fresh, and they haven't had the opportunity to confer. I'm sure they talk about it. Are there things you would like to ask us before we plunge in?
6. A. No, that all makes perfect sense.
7. **Ms Lampard:** Paul, let me begin the questioning with the easy ones about what your role is and what your responsibilities at the moment are?
8. A. I'm responsible for the operations, which include custodial contracts - there are seven in total, which include five prisons and immigration centres.
9. Q. Just remind me which is the other immigration centre?
10. A. Tinsley House.
11. Q. Oh, I see, those two.
12. A. There are two separate contracts coming together as one, we manage it as one, but I think formally it's two separate contracts, we have a contract for a Secure Training Centre, which is Oakhill, which I'm responsible for, which is in Milton Keynes. We have five prisons dotted around mainly the Midlands up to Liverpool, and Parc, down in Wales. I also have responsibility for some community contracts in Wales as well, we provide some offender drug services in the community throughout South Wales.
13. Q. What was your experience for that job, where have you been before now?
14. A. I worked for the Ministry of Justice up until the end of May last year, so I only joined G4S at the end of May. My CV is predominantly as a prison Governor, two previous times in my career had involvement with management of immigration centres, I was the Deputy Governor of a small immigration centre on the south coast called Haslar, which I think has now closed. That was early 2000, 2001 –
15. **Mr Marsden:** It was an old prison?
16. A. Yes, it was a single storey, I think it was originally part of some military installation down there, it's all military and naval - the seafront of Gosport. Then I was Governor of Lindholme Prison in 2007 to 2010, and that had an annexe which was an immigration centre there as well, so it was a two-centre operation that I was running. I spent the last seven years of my career doing mainly big outsourcing projects with the Ministry of Justice, and ended up responsible for the contract management of private prisons for the Ministry of Justice.
17. Q. Paul, is this job London-based for you?
18. A. No, no, it's very rare that I'm in London.

19. Q. It's out on the ground?
20. A. It should be.
21. **Ms Lampard:** Where are you based?
22. A. Home is in [ Sensitive/Irrelevant ] that's the closest place I have to home.
23. Q. Central England.
24. A. Yes. The idea is, it was a new role, well, it's a role that Jerry has had in his business on and off for years, I don't know if Jerry has explained the background to it?
25. Q. He did, but you give us your explanation for how it came about.
26. A. It's a role that I know that G4S have had on and off for years, and people have gone into it and not stayed for very long.
27. **Mr Marsden:** Yes, he told us that.
28. A. I went through a selection process, got the job in, I think it was April time, left the Civil Service, came across to G4S fairly quickly, because of the restrictions that you have in the Civil Service, if you leave the Civil Service to the private sector they put some restrictions around what you can and can't do. They largely stopped me doing the job properly for six months.
29. **Ms Lampard:** When do you think you did start doing the job properly?
30. A. Formally, I couldn't go to any contract review meetings - this is with the Prison Service, not with the Home Office, I was fine with the Home Office, the Home Office was the one agency that I could, because I've not previously had anything to do with them. There was this period of time from the end of May through to the beginning of November, where the Ministry of Justice had me on this set of restrictions of things I could not get involved with. Part of my job is that I'm on call, if there's an incident I have to manage the incident as the company gold - I couldn't do that till 1 November, I couldn't engage with the authority on any contractual matters. Excuse me, this is very annoying, but it looks like I have a call coming in -[Answers telephone]
31. **Ms Lampard:** You were just saying, until the beginning of November you had several service restrictions, you couldn't do contract review meetings with them, you couldn't do gold command, but you could do, presumably, your own reviews, your own contract management within G4S?
32. A. Yes, I could operate beneath, not the radar, but in a way that meant I wasn't going to see the authority to say, there's an issue here, and this is what we need to do to resolve it. I couldn't do anything formal with them, but informally we just got on with it.
33. Q. What I'd like you to try and explain to me is, in your full capacity now, how do you assure yourself about what is going on in Brook House - what's the information you rely on, how often do you go there, what's the reporting that they have to do? I'd just like to understand how you keep your grip on Brook House.
34. A. Not as well as I'd like to. I should be doing regular assurance visits myself, there is nothing better than walking around a centre to find out what's going on.
35. Q. When you say you don't, that's just simply time, is it?

36. A. Yes. It sounds like a dreadful excuse, but we are very busy sorting out Birmingham, which is a major headache to us. The reason I'm here today, apart from seeing you, is we have a meeting with Peter Neden to review the contract, and it's incredibly time-consuming. The governance that sits above us, my relationship with here and the extremities of C&DS, being geographically very dispersed, means that I get very limited time to do what I think is my job.
37. Q. How often, say between May and now, will you have been into Brook House?
38. A. That's slightly skewed by the *Panorama*, because I spent a whole week there post-*Panorama*, and then went back quite a few times shortly after that. The last time I did a visit that I would consider a visit, was 1 November, then dates go in my diary to do further ones, and they get moved because of other activities that I'm required to do, other things that I'm told I have to go and do.
39. Mr Marsden: The Birmingham issue, Jerry had spent a lot of time dealing with Birmingham in 2017, is it internal issues that you're dealing with, or is it service provision issues, as in, it's a failing –
40. A. It's both, and on top of that we have Oakhill as well, so not only have we had Brook House, but Oakhill was moved into Jerry's business, I think in probably about April 2016.
41. Ms Lampard: Remind me about Oakhill.
42. A. Oakhill is a small Secure Training Centre, there are three of these centres around the country, one down at Medway, there's Oakhill in Milton Keynes and Rainsbrook in Warwickshire, near Rugby. At one point, all three were operated by G4S, post-Medway they ended up being left with Oakhill – this is all prior to my time. Some of this is my understanding of what people have told me – G4S were trying to sell the business as a whole but couldn't sell Children's Services with the STC, I think because of issues around it being an SPV, it's a PFI contract.
43. When I became involved working for G4S the YJB were concerned about Oakhill, it wasn't operating very well, and Jerry got agreement from them that they would allow me to engage with them on the operation of Oakhill, so they bent the rules for me on that one, so that I could get involved. It's a very challenging place to operate, and we've had to work hard to make some improvements there.
44. Mr Marsden: Is it cultural issues, staffing issues, regime –
45. A. It's all the same.
46. Ms Lampard: Is it turning a corner?
47. A. It's improving –
48. Q. But it still takes up a lot of your time.
49. A. I'm not a children expert, I've not come from a background that is looking after children, and it is very different, there's a whole host of other things that we have to do and different agencies that we have to work with, it's a very complex place to operate, with so many different stakeholders. It's clearly just a huge responsibility, looking after some very difficult, damaged and dangerous young people.

50. Within about a month of me being around the Director resigned, we then ran a competition, appointed the Deputy Director into the Director's role, and it was almost like a perfect storm of things coming in where, with hindsight, Paul wasn't ready for that step up, didn't have the experience to do it: the place had improved under him when the previous Director left, but it was knocked off course quite quickly by some very challenging young people, and it's incredible how the whole place can change –
51. Q. Paul was the new person you put in, after you had to remove the previous Director.
52. Mr Marsden: He was the Deputy.
53. A. Yes. It went through a process, we advertised externally, it's all subject to approval from the Secretary of State, our posts, so it was all subject to that, but then all these things started coming together and happening. I just saw a centre not moving forward, and an interim Director, as he was then, not really gripping the issues, not knowing which levers to pull to manage it, and how to bring it all together. I then took the decision that we needed to retreat from that position and do something different. There is are similar issues at Birmingham, a team there just not gripping the operation, both very challenging operations, significant turnover of staff, similar to Brook House, high levels of attrition, just a constant battle to recruit enough people to fill the jobs.
54. Oakhill, I took the decision that we should talk to Paul about it not being the right time for him to be the Director, which he agreed, and we went through a recruitment process. We brought somebody up from Parc, who was a very experienced Deputy at Parc, it's is a big, complex prison, with a young people's unit, and Lisette has gone up, and started gripping things.
55. Ms Lampard: When did she start?
56. A. October time. My job gets better when I have the right people in the contracts, because I can then start doing my job, rather than –
57. Mr Marsden: Firefighting.
58. A. Be down in the weeds, firefighting, writing action plans, so both at Birmingham and Oakhill I have spent an inordinate amount of time with the Directors, writing their action plans and how they're going to fix these things. Being candid, I didn't expect to be operating in that way, we don't operate in a strategic way at all, it's all very reactive, it is putting out fires, you just go from one crisis to the next, which is why I'm embarrassed to sit here and say, I've not been to Gatwick since 1 November.
59. Ms Lampard: There is an argument, isn't there, that that is always the case with prisons, they are complicated and very demanding. I suppose the next question is, do you think that really you are being asked to do a job for which you probably need a bit more support?
60. A. Yes.
61. Q. Have you raised that with Jerry?
62. A. Yes.
63. Q. Is anything going to be done about that?
64. A. No.

65. Q. You're relying a lot, therefore, on contract performance discussions?
66. A. Data.
67. Q. Data, yes. You have what I understand are contract – what are they called?
68. Mr Marsden: Trading reviews.
69. Ms Lampard: Trading reviews – how often does that happen?
70. A. I inherited a trading review system of each month, every contract provides a trading review pack, which is in excess of 100 sites, and they would have a two-hour slot.
71. Q. Every quarter?
72. A. Every month. I would lose three days of my working month, you wouldn't have time to read the slide decks, you have 700 slides to read, and often they come in a day or two before.
73. Mr Marsden: Yes, they've been spending so much time collating it all.
74. A. It's a cottage industry. What I've discovered is, every time someone either lets something slip or Jerry wants something else, the answer is, let's have another slide in the trading review pack, so we just make it longer and longer. Then the Directors come in with their teams, and they all sit there, we talk through the slides, and then we run out of time. We never get all the business done that we need to do. It's a process that relies on the quality of information, the accuracy and veracity of the individuals telling us what's going on.
75. Q. It also means you have to pick between a huge volume of information, to alight on the things that might be really of concern or you really want to talk about. It's not an exception reporting –
76. A. It's the whole report, and also, it's what they want to tell us about as well, so sometimes there's a huge amount of frustration, I'm sure, in the room, for them, where I'm saying – you can see the next people coming in! I got to the point where every time we did the trading reviews, the team would do it with me, so we have HR there, Finance, sometimes Martin, the Commercial Director, will be there, Andrew, Health and Safety is there, and Mike Gibson, the Assurance Manager is there. At the end of it we would always say, how do we make this better, how do we change this?
77. We have gone this year to a slightly different system where we are doing monthly trading reviews for those on the watch list – Gatwick, Oakhill, Birmingham – prisons that we are worried about, the contracts we're worried about, I should say, are on a monthly trading review. The ones that we are less concerned about, that don't need as much attention, are on a bi-monthly one, which has eased a bit of the pressure, but I've only gained one day a month out of that.
78. Ms Lampard: What I think I want to ask you is, you get lots of information about what they want to tell you, so I assume what they want to tell you are staffing levels, their turnover, how much they've been fined for not providing something, how much they are able to produce in terms of meeting the contract. Is there a slot in those monthly meetings for them to give you a

- description of the temperature of the place, how it feels, what's on their worry list, the softer intelligence?
79. A. They have the Exec Summary for that, so their introduction is where you would expect them to do that. They also include their risk register in there, we always go through their risk register, and certainly the conversation about staffing. We also look at incidents as well, we will always review the levels of incidents, assaults, self-harm, any security incidents, the whole range of information that gives me a sense of the temperature check on it.
80. Q. Although you have limited time and all that sort of thing, last year when you started, between May and the time of the *Panorama* programme, what was the soft intelligence that you were picking up, what were they telling you?
81. A. From Gatwick?
82. Q. Yes. Can you recall?
83. A. The soft intelligence was –
84. Q. The Exec Summary, the risks, the temperature stuff.
85. A. I think it was probably largely around the number of time-served offenders going in there. The challenges that they were experiencing were more prisoner-like behaviour, a more challenging population, and the increasing prevalence of drugs. MPS in particular, in there, that they had not seen before, so those sorts of “prison issues” were starting to come into the centre.
86. **Mr Marsden:** Brought by the growing population?
87. A. Of time-served offenders, yes.
88. **Ms Lampard:** Can you recollect whether staffing levels were beginning to become a problem for them?
89. A. My recollection is that there was this time when Tinsley House had been closed, so they had gone from this healthier position, and as Tinsley and the PDA were re-opening, Ben was presenting to us with a very high level of confidence that it was manageable with the staffing that he had.
90. Q. When Tinsley was –
91. A. During the summer, at trading reviews, we would review the staffing. I distinctly remember one conversation where we saw a significant gap, should I say, in the staffing data, and Ben was absolutely clear that it was a manageable situation. Bearing in mind that he was expecting to have to make reductions for the new contract, so he had one eye on the new contract, and saw this as a manageable situation to get through, he was very confident.
92. **Mr Marsden:** When you say “the new contract”, the re-bid?
93. A. Yes.
94. **Ms Lampard:** When was the re-bid being designed?
95. A. It was before my time.
96. Q. It had already been designed?
97. A. Yes.
98. **Mr Marsden:** It was assuming a lower level of staffing?
99. A. There were staffing reductions in it, yes.



100. Q. In order to get it price-competitive?
101. A. I don't know, I didn't sign it off, I've just done a review of it, I don't know what the logic was to the efficiencies in the staffing.
102. **Ms Lampard:** Can I ask you then to help me with something, I know it's all done in terms of hours, but if you translate the hours under the old contract, as I understand it, they were coming out at about 36 staff on a daily basis, and at some stage, Ben says he wants to introduce 32 staff on a daily basis; and the effect of that is two DCOs on each wing, and half a DCM to cover. You'd have two DCMs on the wings and then you would have two DCOs on each wing – does any of that ring a bell?
103. A. I know that they ended up with two on the wing.
104. Q. Is the difficulty you're having just translating the hours into numbers –
105. A. No, the difficulty is that I think that was done before my time.
106. Q. It was before your time, but as I understand it, Ben introduces this 32, they go down to 32, and what I'm wondering is, was the 32 something he was doing to pre-empt the bid, to get himself to the bid stage. When you arrived, here he was at 32, which was his contribution to the bid, or was there going to be even further cutting down?
107. A. I don't know, because it pre-dates my arrival, all I know is that when I arrived, staffing levels were low on the wings.
108. Q. There was a suggestion it was going to go further?
109. A. No, it couldn't have gone any further, there might have been a suggestion, no-one told me there was a suggestion. I suspect it's reasonable to assume that the move from 36 to 32 was to get bid-ready, model-ready, but I can't confirm that.
110. Q. No, and so far as you are aware, in terms of the new bid, you're not suggesting you returned to the levels you found in the summer?
111. A. In the bid?
112. Q. Yes.
113. A. Since Lee's gone in we've rectified that –
114. **Mr Marsden:** He's putting out 36?
115. A. Yes.
116. **Ms Lampard:** He's put it back up to that, has he?
117. A. Yes. I've not been anywhere near the bid, I was asked last week to come down and do a review of the bid - another reason I didn't go and do a visit, but it was worth doing.
118. Q. I'm not trying to put you on the spot, I'm just trying to understand that there wouldn't be any suggestion that this was going to go any further, or that even Ben was not suggesting that it might go any further down than the staffing last summer.
119. **Mr Marsden:** Can I just ask a question about the role of Ben, or the role of a Centre Director, in the management of a contract: is the Director there to make it profitable, is it an active task of the Director to produce the profit?

120. A. The Director has a number of responsibilities, delivery of their budget, including margin, is clearly their responsibility – ultimately it flows up to me and then up to Jerry, but we employ the Director as the accountable officer.
121. Q. To keep quality and profit in alignment.
122. A. Deliver the contract. I think G4S would say that if they have a contract, we deliver it, and if they have expectations of x margin, that that contract produces that margin, even if there have been problems with how the bid has been constructed.
123. Q. The Director is held to account for that, and the way he or she can deal with that is then dealing with the inputs, and flexing the inputs, and saying, we'll have a little less of this -
124. A. In a custodial operation, where 60 per cent of your spend is staff, then you have limitations. You can always save some money on procurement and other areas of spend, but the biggest spend is on your staffing, so if you're under pressure, it will be there.
125. Q. Has Brook House traditionally been a profitable contract?
126. A. Sorry, again, I couldn't say traditionally, but my assumption would have been that it's been profitable, yes.
127. **Ms Lampard:** When you say that Ben was confident last summer that he could cope and that there were holes in the staffing, do you mean there were holes in the staffing in the sense that the 32 was not being met, or that the planned staffing didn't look good enough?
128. A. It was the headline numbers, it was the overall number of vacancies that he had.
129. Q. He wasn't necessarily meeting even what it was he thought he would?
130. A. No, he was confident that by using overtime, it was do-able, and this is the problem I see in this sort of operation - not just Brook House, but I'm dealing with the same issues at Oakhill and Birmingham. If a Director does not keep his or her eye on the ball around staffing, if you allow your staffing just to slip - it's a fine margin: people will do some extra hours, they will swap shifts, they will do some overtime, if it suddenly drops like that and the staff see a lot going, everyone goes, what's going on? They start to lose confidence, they look around, what's happening here, why are people leaving? They then end up doing too much overtime, and they're tired, so they go sick and it's just a bad situation. Once we get ourselves behind that curve, it's like pushing treacle, it really is.
131. **Mr Marsden:** We can see that at Brook House, as fast as you run an ITC, people come in, and then, this is a really difficult place to work, I'm in the wrong job.
132. A. Yes, you've lost the confidence, the engagement of your staff, everyone is talking about leaving, so it just snowballs, this sense of, we don't like it here.
133. **Ms Lampard:** Can I ask some slightly more personal questions, not about you, but about them, what we are hearing about Ben, and I think what we've seen from him on the ground and the practical way he managed, he was good at managing the figures, and therefore very good at managing relations with the Home Office locally. He was good at impressing people here, 'I can cope, and these are the figures', he was not good at managing operationally within his own centre – he was not visible, he was not approachable, he didn't really

- know what was going on, and he had a staffing style left to his Deputy, which was punitive, disciplinary, as opposed to supportive, engaging and developmental. Does any of that ring true for you?
134. A. Yes.
135. Q. You haven't heard otherwise?
136. A. No, and I've not thought otherwise.
137. Q. Did you think that from the beginning?
138. A. I spent relatively little time with Ben, it was one of the first places I visited. Ben is a very charming person, who manages very well, he was very verbose, and I think thought he could talk himself out of anything, and if you asked him a question he would very nimbly turn it around to something else, so you had to be really alive to, hang on, I need to pull him back to this. You are absolutely right, very good at managing the relationship with the customer, and I suspect, because he'd always deliver his numbers, was well thought of.
139. When I walked around with him, on my first visit, I would just simply say, for me the jury was out, I wasn't sure. Unfortunately by the time *Panorama* came along and then I started to get a better understanding of what hadn't been happening, some of the systems that Directors should make sure are working, weren't there.
140. Q. Particularly what sort of systems might you have –
141. A. Use of Force Committee, the Self-Audit Programme, reviewing incidents, body-worn cameras weren't working. Post-*Panorama*, looking at all this stuff, finding it out, blood pressure's going through the roof!
142. Mr Marsden: Basic governance and infrastructure absent.
143. A. Yes, and things were just left, it was kind of like no-one was driving those things, and as you've said, Kate, I do want to go back to the punitive management approach, because we were getting centrally through the Navex system and HR data, an increased level of grievances coming from them. Just prior to *Panorama* I'd arranged for myself and Heather Noble, the senior HR BP, we'd discussed it and decided we were going to go and do a visit and just go and do a review of cases. I intervened in a disciplinary case that was one that they were going through, and the local HR team had flagged it with Heather, who had flagged it with me.
144. You are absolutely right, I was looking at it thinking, there's no natural justice in the procedures, it just felt to me, when I looked at it, that it was a poor quality investigation. They were trying to apply pressure to, I think it was Sarah Newland, who was doing the hearing, to dismiss an individual, they might well have had grounds for dismissal, but it wasn't evident in the report.
145. Ms Lampard: Was that a junior person, or was it one of the SMT?
146. A. It was a junior person.
147. Q. Were you aware, too, of the number of grievances that had also been between the Senior Management Team, quite a dysfunctional Senior Management Team.
148. A. I heard a fair bit of that post-*Panorama* from Lee, about some of the history of that, with a Deputy particularly, there had been this issue between Ben and

his Deputy, and his Deputy had gone off somewhere else, and I am now aware that there had been other issues.

149. Q. I won't ask you about that, but extraordinary numbers of the Senior Management Team had left, without anything looking like a normal retirement –

150. Mr Marsden: One of the things that has emerged from our work is that, Lee has stabilised the ship and I think people at DCO and DCM level see him as a leader, but within the management structure of Brook House there are some really important bits that I think are absent. We spent a week in the centre, the week there was a Nigerian charter going out, and just watched Juls in meetings, and thought, you're not doing your job, you're not adding anything to this meeting, yet it is a residential issue, the departure of people, and their safe movement, and where they are housed before the charter. We've come across some fairly serious evidence about him not acting on security concerns, that led to quite a serious disturbance last year. I suppose why I'm saying that is, I think that it feels quite rocky even now, doesn't it?

151. Ms Lampard: There was a plan last year to move him to Tinsley House, Ben had apparently decided that he was going to move him to Tinsley House, and had discussed that with Sarah Newland. I think that was the suggestion, that there would be a direct swap with Sara Edwards -

152. A. Are you sure it's Ben, I think it might have been me.

153. Q. Was that you? Tell us about that.

154. A. Ben might have had that discussion.

155. Q. Who did you have that with?

156. A. With Sarah Newland.

157. Mr Marsden: About Juls?

158. A. Yes. I had to go and deal with Ben.

159. Ms Lampard: After *Panorama*?

160. A. After *Panorama*, so me and Heather Noble went down and we had to do the conversation with Ben that isn't going to end well, and Heather and I found out about *Panorama* the week before the bank holiday weekend, and Heather and I headed down there on the bank holiday Monday so we could spend the rest of the week there. Then we'd spend quite a bit more time there following that, so I thought we were pretty well placed to make an early assessment of any potential management changes that we may need to make, and we both identified two people on the Management Team.

161. I had a conversation with Sarah Newland one day down at Tinsley House to say, in terms of the SMT, how do you see it all working, and that then led to a conversation about Juls, and I discussed with her, because I thought she needed a better Head of Res –

162. Mr Marsden: Absolutely.

163. A. She did say, we've had a conversation as an SMT about Juls not delivering, he's not been delivering various things, so there has clearly been some conversation with Ben, I wasn't party to that, but she did reference that they had had a discussion about Juls. I was cautious about what I was saying,

because it was a confidential issue and I didn't want to give any impression of my views one way or the other. It's always easier said than done, doing that, but we had that conversation about, if Juls was to come out, how would you feel about him being down here, and would Sara be a good replacement for him up there? I was looking at the rest of the team, thinking, who else do we have there?

164. **Ms Lampard:** Why did it never happen, do you know?

165. **A.** Lee took a different view, Lee went in, I'd had a conversation with Jerry about the two people that I thought we needed to deal with it -

166. **Q.** Was the other one Steve Skitt?

167. **A.** Indeed.

168. **Mr Marsden:** We're in exactly the same place.

169. **Ms Lampard:** Lee has a different view?

170. **A.** Yes.

171. **Q.** Or does Lee think he's going to manage them slightly differently, and manage them out?

172. **A.** No, no, Lee doesn't want to manage them out. Juls is doing a senior management role, and he isn't a senior manager, so the rest of that management team are a grade higher than Juls, Juls is a middle manager really, and that's what you see with Juls. Lee's argument is, we're asking too much of him, he's not capable of doing that, but Lee describes him as a very loyal, kind of willing soldier, he will come in, do anything you ask, if they're short on a weekend he will come in and help out, and does all those sorts of things. Lee sees him as a good guy, but just probably operating at a level that he's not ready for. We then did advertise, we sought to recruit a Head of Res

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173. **Mr Marsden:** That's when Sara Edwards applied?

174. **A.** Yes, and the quality of the field wasn't particularly good, and the strongest candidate then withdrew, so having reviewed the applications and the online tests that people do, we decided to withdraw that for a period of time.

175. **Ms Lampard:** You are now re-advertising?

176. **A.** We will have to. The situation with the Director is really difficult, because we are really missing having Lee in the business, in the job that he should be doing —

177. **Mr Marsden:** Which is the sort of audit and oversight function?

178. **A.** Well, his job was Business Development Director. Post-*Panorama* Jerry and Peter decided that we need to improve the assurance and that was going to go onto Lee's job, so Lee would head up the assurance line, reporting to Jerry, so separate to me. In a business like this, when you are very stretched across Gatwick, Oakhill — we're in rectification at Oakhill, so we were served 16 rectification notices the week before Christmas, so again, you stop what you're doing, go and spend a week there and write action plans to address rectification notices, and because you don't have any resource anywhere - all the prisons are tightly resourced, so there is no fat, there aren't spare people that you can just say — you can to some extent, but not as much as you'd like.

179. As a model, when everything's running fine, it works, but when everything is very efficient and tight you have no resilience, and then people like me end up in the weeds, writing action plans, when I'm not going down to Gatwick, checking how things are going with Lee.
180. **Ms Lampard:** Can we just clear up where we are with the Head of Residence –
181. **A.** Sorry, yes, we stalled it on the basis that –
182. **Mr Marsden:** Lee thought it was salvageable.
183. **A.** No, no, nothing to do with Juls, Juls will not get that job, it is regarding the fact that at the time, we thought that Lee was only going to be there for a few months, and we would soon be recruiting for a new Director, and it made sense just to step back from that, recruit a new Director, and then let the new Director choose their team. We keep asking and the Home Office won't let us advertise the job, which Jerry's been dealing with. I do wonder whether we should allow them to dictate whether or not we can advertise for a Director, given the pressure it's causing elsewhere for us, but that's where we are, Jerry asked again this week, and they've again said no.
184. **Q.** Our view about the whole recruitment plan, and the hope to hit positive staffing numbers in April, is being undermined by Juls' lack of grip, because the regime and the activities programme – we were talking to one of the Activities Team yesterday – feels as though it's still very spartan. I spoke to Juls just a week or so ago while I was there and said, you've been charged with producing an incentive scheme, when is that going to happen and he was, well, I need to go and visit this place, and I need to visit that place, and it will be maybe four months, if we're lucky. People are today saying, we need some levers, we don't have any, and it's very undermining, I think, and I am concerned that the April numbers that Lee is optimistic, might not be realised, because I think as fast as they are running ITCs, people are leaving, and we get a very strong feeling of that from interviews.
185. **Ms Lampard:** *[Interrupted by telephone]* Ideally we would have spoken to Lee about this, but we just haven't seen him in the centre, so we had to raise it with you, we raised it with Peter, and we will have to apologise to him that we have the process the wrong way round. Of course, we will put these things to Lee himself.
186. You will know this from the other side of the fence, this is very important, this issue of an incentive scheme, because I think what the staff are telling us is that they are dealing with a very challenging population of people, it's getting more challenging, it's becoming more like a prison in terms of behaviours, and the prevalence of drugs, and all that sort of thing. They are left powerless in the face of that to in any way be able to correct people's behaviours.
187. There has been a stand-off in some respects, because the incentive scheme was an imitation of the prison one, which I think quite rightly HMIP said, hang on, you can't have people on a basic regime, so that was withdrawn, and then it was just using paid work, and of course, I'm a lawyer, and you look at the terms of the immigration removal centre rules and to be honest, it sort of suggests that everybody should have access to work. There hasn't been use of other things like, you can't use the IT, and the idea that you could make an incentive scheme, as I put it. He accepts you could have an incentive scheme where everybody is on a decent regime, but you could have extras. I think

- Lee identifies that as being the way forward here – does that ring true with you? Is that what you would be expecting them to come up with?
188. A. Yes. In a centre where you don't have the levers and the control mechanisms that you have in a prison, then you have to be creative and innovative, and use a scheme like that to encourage the right behaviour.
189. Q. Have you seen that elsewhere working?
190. A. Not with detainees, not for a long time, and we will have had some system in my previous lives. Both centres are closed now, the problem was, when I was involved, we were allowed to use adjudications, at the early stages of my immigration centre experience.
191. Mr Marsden: It was much more prison-like in its –
192. A. Yes, it was.
193. Ms Lampard: We've been told, I think by Paul Gasson at the Home Office, that there was still an issue when he left, at the end of last year, there were still discussions going on about how many extra staff should or should not have been deployed in order to meet the 60 extra beds that were put in at Brook House in April of last year, can you tell us anything about those discussions?
194. A. No. Again, I didn't have the discussions, Lee has a lot of the detail around that because we did reference it slightly last week. I recall QCRM in, probably July, either July or August time last year, where it had all gone very well, as you say, relations between them with Ben were great - and right at the end of it Paul looks up and says to Ben, by the way Ben, I've been doing some work on the MSL and we need to talk about it, because there are going to be some penalties - words to that effect.
195. Q. The MSL?
196. A. Minimum Staffing Levels, and that, I understand, refers to what you are talking about, the 60 extra, the additional staff that went in, and at that point Ben went wide-eyed, and was kind of like, ah, yes, so there was something there, I thought.
197. Q. He didn't want a discussion in front of you about that?
198. A. It was right at the end of the QCRM, Quarterly Contract Review Meeting, and my recollection is it was just Paul saying, I need to talk to you about this, it was not part of the formal meeting, so we didn't discuss it further.
199. Mr Marsden: The implication being, the numbers weren't right.
200. A. Yes, and I think that's ongoing with the Home Office and Lee working through that with them, where they are saying, we gave you some extra staff, we want to see you've had the extra staff. Well, it doesn't always work quite that way, because clearly they will think that G4S have just taken the money and not provided the extra staff. The headline figure has been increased, but we've not managed to recruit to that yet, but are we delivering the right number of people on the landings? I think sometimes it's the case that we aren't, and that means that we are paying penalties, but that's what we've signed up to, and that's then managing the contract properly.
201. Ms Lampard: There was an incident on 28 November, it was a sort of mass insurrection on one wing, and then there was a subsequent assault by the people who perpetrated it when they were moved to the CSU, they then

- assaulted people in the office, I just wonder what your thoughts were as a result of that, about, as I say, the temperature of that institution?
202. A. I was worried about it, but I know from experience, particularly in immigration centres, that the temperature can change with a small number of detainees that come in, and it's about how you manage that really. The issue that I think is a challenge for us is that the Home Office are the ones that make the decision on whether somebody stays in segregation, so we may put someone into segregation who we think is a danger to the good order of the centre, they will then review that after 24 hours and if the individual is presenting as compliant, then they let them out.
203. As an operator, that's like doing the job with both hands tied behind your back, because you can't control your population, and it means that they own the risk, in many respects, for the good order of the centre, because if they make those sorts of decision, we have to work with that.
204. Mr Marsden: Officers comment about that – well he was subject to a Rule 40, but the next morning he was back in the centre.
205. A. Yes. I do notice a difference in the contracts that we operate, when you deal with the prisons, because we are dealing with an organisation that runs prisons. They get it, they know what you're dealing with, they don't use the contract in the same way, because they have their own problems elsewhere, you know, they want to help you to succeed because they know it's a difficult job, when we're dealing with Oakhill and Gatwick, we're dealing with agencies that are not operators, so their monitoring of that contract is a very administrative approach.
206. Q. Rather than, what does this mean for the centre if we take these decisions?
207. A. Yes. We understand the leadership challenge that that gives you, as a centre Director, when one of your staff has just been seriously assaulted, and you want to put them in segregation, but we say, actually, he's been quite polite to us this morning, so we're going to let him out. I'd personally find that very frustrating as a centre Director, if I had to manage that situation.
208. Ms Lampard: Talking to the Home Office, their measure of success is about numbers out the door, numbers in, and it's quite clear to us, I think, from talking to them, that their idea of what was an issue, something that they and their staff on site should have been sensitive to, was not anything to do with the standard of how you run and manage a custodial environment. It was all about whether or not people presented on time, and that's your experience?
209. A. Yes, it's a different set of values, I would describe, to prison people, so when we operate prisons, our job, we feel, is to reform people and give them a chance of leading a law-abiding life, and you can actually motivate people around that, there is an intrinsic reward for seeing people improve their lives, and become less of a risk to society. When you are dealing with an agency that is all about removing people from the country, it's quite a hard measure, isn't it, in terms of dealing with people, how do we get our staff to build relationships with the detainees, because our job is just to hold them there, we don't even manage their cases.
210. Most of their grievances are about the Home Office, not about how we treat them and what we do, but it means there's not a lot of opportunity for engagement with the individuals, and for our staff, that sense of purpose and



what it is they're doing isn't what it can be, when you are working with offenders in a prison.

211. **Mr Marsden:** It's interesting, talking to one member of staff who worked on the voluntary return scheme last year, an officer, G4S officer, really, really animated by the impact of his work, and the consequences to individuals about fronting up with them discussions about, you've been deported five times, don't think the Home Office are going to entrust you suddenly, they're not, and people, saying, okay, I get that. I thought it was really interesting, a very different model, a very different role for G4S in that institution, which clearly staff felt very proud of, they were doing something very useful.
212. **A.** It's good.
213. **Ms Lampard:** It begs the question, doesn't it, about the extent to which you are explicit with staff, and have an explicit understanding of the role and purpose of this organisation and the challenges that they are going to be facing. It seems to us, I think, that there is not enough investment in that sort of reflection and honesty and support for staff to understand that everybody understands they are doing a very difficult job, and I'm not clear that enough has been done about that.
214. I know there have been staffing issues, but it's very interesting that after *Panorama*, after the incident on 28 November, there was no common communication about that across the centre, there was no time for reflection, really, there was no debriefing, there was no support with that.
215. **A.** After *Panorama*?
216. **Q.** When we were dealing with the Jimmy Savile investigation, one of the people who advised us on sexual abuse and why it happens in institutions said, of course, you'd be amazed how many people don't actually say to anybody, don't sleep with the patients, don't have sex with the patients – it's bleeding obvious, but nobody did it! To me, I think that's analogous to this, in a sense of, don't beat up the residents, if you see anybody beating up the residents, don't abuse the residents, don't use racial abuse – do you see what I mean? I don't think anybody stood in front of anybody and said to them –
217. **Mr Marsden:** Maybe you're going to tell us differently, other people don't recall it.
218. **A.** I think I'd want to just check back, because I would have thought –
219. **Ms Lampard:** You were there that week.
220. **A.** Yes, but the immediate week was feeding the machine here with action plans and checking evidence and stuff. I'll have to think through, and I certainly think that Lee held a load of focus groups with staff, so I know that when Lee went in, his first week he did staff and detainee focus groups. I'm really clear that Lee has done those focus groups, what he said at those focus groups -
221. **Q.** The way they hear it is that they were simply told, this has happened, some people are going to be dismissed, there are investigations going on, this is where we're at, as opposed to reflection on what went wrong, how easy is that to go wrong, we understand why you might be in a position where you get frustrated, what are your mechanisms for coping with that, one of them cannot be beating up the residents. Do you see the difference?
222. **A.** Yes, I suspect that that hasn't happened because people are always a bit nervous about how much they say, and particularly if there are ongoing

disciplinary procedures happening, so yes, I take the point that that won't have been said in that way.

223. Q. I'm not suggesting that what I've suggested is the right way to put it, there are probably much more subtle ways that people who know about organisational development and behaviours will have been able to design for you, but it is interesting to me that none of that appears to have happened. If we're completely wrong about that, will you come back and tell us? We'll certainly check with Lee.
224. A. Yes, I think it's worth having a conversation with Lee, I won't really be able to check what Ben said.
225. Mr Marsden: We might be able to, because we've invited him –
226. A. Has he said he's going to see you?
227. Q. He has responded, but he hasn't yet made a decision.
228. Ms Lampard: Another question that we need slightly to unpick is, I'd like to say to you that we have seen some fantastic interactions between staff and detainees, first class, and we have experience of being in another centre, so really amongst the best. If there are any medals going, you have a welfare officer who is just extraordinary –
229. Mr Marsden: The DCO we spoke to yesterday.
230. Ms Lampard: The DCO we spoke to yesterday - some great people.
231. A. That's good to know.
232. Q. There is an issue about visibility of managers, senior managers, particularly, I think, Lee and Steve and Juls, about ownership to tender by officers, DCMs and further up, what needs to get done, modelling how you want them to behave and inconsistent use of policies. People not feeling able to approach management to get the support they need, not being given the support they need, and feeling that if they do tell anybody about anything it becomes an issue, it becomes a disciplinary and then things fester and it becomes a grievance.
233. I just want to know what sort of reassurance you're getting from Lee about all of that, and whether that's on his radar, and how he's managing it, and I apologise to Lee, who's not here, for not having raised that with him.
234. A. I think in terms of the time that Lee has been in there, that got worse for a little bit, and it's improved. I think he's had to resolve some difficult issues, and it will get better, but in order for that to get better we have to appoint a permanent Director, regardless of whatever the Home Office think about the contract and whether or not they're going to award it to us or, that centre is going to exist in a year's time, whoever is running it. The people that we look after and the staff that we employ deserve assurance and to know who it is they're working for. I think that's pretty key to getting those wider issues resolved.
235. Mr Marsden: They're still resistant to it, as of this week?
236. A. Yes. I only just saw the email this morning from Jerry, so I've not managed to catch up with him about it, but yes, we were hoping that we'd be pressing a button on a recruitment exercise fairly soon.

237. Q. I got the impression they were going to say something this month about the future of the contract.
238. A. Maybe, I don't know that.
239. Q. Isn't that what Peter –
240. **Ms Lampard:** Implied. Your sense is that Lee's managing these issues, has them on his radar, and things are getting a bit better, but there's still a bit of a hill to climb?
241. A. Yes, and he's the interim Director, and Lee will work hard, and he will do his best to improve that centre, but there will only be so much that you do as an interim. That centre needs cultural change, and you can only do that by having a long-term strategy with the right quality senior leader, who knows what they're doing.
242. Just going back to what happened with *Panorama*, I will never believe that that Senior Management Team didn't have some knowledge of some of those behaviours going on. If you walk around a centre you get a feel for it, you see how people interact with each other, and the detainees, and the language that they used, never mind the violence, but just the dismissive language and the swearing, and the fact that they were doing it openly, with other people slightly off camera as well. Having done my rounds as a Duty Governor for years, you walk into offices and you get a feel for what's going on, and as a Governor, you have a range of people who tell you what's happening.
243. Q. I think what we are hearing, and what we're probably seeing, is there is a quite laddish clique, who are quite influential within the centre, and somebody put it to us they are operationally effective. People have tolerated that, but there is around them a bit of a culture of, it's male and it's quite laddish, and I suspect that is where you get this tolerance of *braggadocio*, and swearing and that sort of thing, and if not checked, that leads to -
244. A. Yes.
245. Q. There was a G4S staff survey just before Christmas – are you aware of that?
246. A. Yes, the results haven't come out yet.
247. Q. I just wondered what prompted that, or whether that was an ongoing, usual thing.
248. A. It's a biennial one they do.
249. Q. Okay. Then there was a recent survey of detainees at Brook House, which I think was put in place by Steve Skitt.
250. **Mr Marsden:** I think so, yes.
251. **Ms Lampard:** I just wonder what had prompted that, did he do that off his own bat?
252. A. I don't know.
253. **Mr Marsden:** The one that he showed us?
254. **Ms Lampard:** Yes.
255. **Mr Marsden:** I think that might have been a local initiative.

256. **Ms Lampard:** Yes, I think it was, I just wondered what had prompted it.
257. **Mr Marsden:** I think it might have been Mr Costa, Simon Costa, who has been an advocate for detainees.
258. **Ms Lampard:** There are a number of things: you mentioned body-worn cameras, they've been introduced, but quite a lot of people are only wearing them occasionally, some of them aren't wearing them at all, and some of them will tell you that they haven't had the training because the training person is not there. Do you have a view about the body-worn cameras, and how effective they are?
259. **A.** It's a bit of PPE, isn't it, if we've invested in them, then we should make sure that people are wearing them. We have a similar issue somewhere else, actually, where we've done that and it's a challenge to get people to wear them.
260. **Q.** Why don't they want to wear them, do you know?
261. **A.** I think people are suspicious of it - it's not just in G4S it's in HMPS as well. They have a real problem getting them into the prisons, because people think they're being recorded all the time, they're very suspicious and think it will be used to discipline people, which it will be if they've done something wrong, it's another form of evidence. There are those issues, and I have mixed views about it in some respects, where I think you have to take people on the journey. My view is, you educate them, you sell it to them, you sell the benefits to them, but ultimately you end up with saying, this is PPE, it's part of your uniform, if you're not wearing it we're going to have to give you a warning about that.
262. **Q.** Yes, because certainly at Yarl's Wood everybody said having them dramatically improved the behaviour of a detainee.
263. **A.** That's what we've found in prisons.
264. **Mr Marsden:** When we attended the 7.45 meeting, Steve was saying to people, go and get body-worn –
265. **Ms Lampard:** He was, but I didn't feel it was directive enough, it was an invitation as opposed to a command.
266. **A.** We need to get to the command – I'll speak to Lee about that.
267. **Q.** The other bit of technology that we're hearing about is a need for better x-ray scanning arrangement, a scanning arrangement - I wonder if that's within the bid? Somebody said to us, body scanners, I imagine they are incredibly expensive – is there any provision for that?
268. **A.** No.
269. **Q.** There is provision, isn't there, for a better entrance to all of the –
270. **A.** Oh, into the wings, yes, but there is a scanner there for property, but the body scanners are very expensive, and we are looking at piloting one in one of our prisons, but there are, as you would probably expect, some legal opinions as to –
271. **Q.** Whether or not it's over-intrusive.
272. **A.** Yes.

273. Q. The technology for getting onto the wings, that is something that's in the new bid, isn't it?
274. A. The sliders that you go through?
275. Q. Yes.
276. A. That is in the bids, yes.
277. Q. It's going to be a more efficient one -
278. A. Yes.
279. Mr Marsden: It's going to be biometric, as I understand it.
280. A. That's right.
281. Q. We've been going nearly an hour and a half.
282. Ms Lampard: I think I'm pretty nearly done. I wanted to ask you one final thing. HMIP came in, one of the things that I think the Board is interested in is how they can have all of these reports, and somehow this was missed in *Panorama* – these are very complicated questions, and I suspect we will never have the full answer to it. Certainly, two things have occurred to us, one is, we think the IMB is pretty weak – do you have any experience of the IMB?
283. A. I know Dick Weber.
284. Q. I think he over-identifies with the Home Office.
285. A. Dick was my boss, many, many years ago, so I know him from one of the first prisons I worked in, he was the Deputy Governor at High Down in Sutton – he's a very bright man.
286. Q. He's a very nice man.
287. A. A lovely guy, real character. I've not spent enough time there and with him to take a view as to that, but I know they were very surprised by *Panorama*, which I suppose you would have to be if you hadn't been reporting any concerns, wouldn't you?
288. Mr Marsden: They'd written a positive one.
289. A. Very positive, and that's another danger for us, isn't it. I'm sitting here telling you that I can't get down to Gatwick, and we end up in the same position, we're replicating, as a business, the same issues that have got us into this position, in my view. It sounds a dreadful excuse, I know you're probably sitting there thinking, I'm sure you could –
290. Q. No, we're not! I can completely understand it.
291. A. I've just spent the best part of a week writing an action plan, and a presentation that I have to give to Peter Neden this afternoon on Birmingham, because Birmingham is falling apart. It's a basket case of a contract, we work weekends to get this stuff done, and it's very difficult.
292. My fear is that unless we get Lee out and we start building this assurance team – and I still don't think that that's the silver bullet, I still think there's something about me being able to go out and do what I need to do. When I walked round the centre the first time I was there I said, it's dirty, get it cleaned up, went back, it's still dirty, Juls, what are you doing to get it cleaned up? Always excuses why they couldn't do it.

293. Q. It still is, it changes from day to day, and some officers are very good. I think that senior people walking around and being visible, and your doing that, the consequential impact of that would I think be very helpful.
294. A. Yes, it's what it needs, in all of our contracts, not just at Gatwick, because it works: I remember when I was a Governor, when my bosses came in, the place got itself geared up, ready for the visit, because we didn't want it to be dirty, and some of those basics of just making sure that a place is clean, it's really powerful.
295. Q. People have talked about things like wings competing with one another to be clean, and you can see how in that kind of closed setting exactly those kinds of thing would galvanise people, particularly if there was something, you got a decent meal at the end of the day or the end of the week, something special if you –
296. A. Or a cake - we do those sorts of thing in the prisons, it's really effective.
297. Q. All that kind of stuff, it feels, having been there and spent a lot of time walking around and being with detainees, that a lot of that stuff is absent, but if it were there, would, I think, be a real powerful spur to the staff, but also make detainees realise there is actually a regime.
298. A. Yes. I've been in there and detainees are openly smoking, and I say to staff, what are you doing about that? They are very absent, aren't they, in terms of their management of the detainees.
299. Q. Absolutely.
300. A. We're going to have to stop smoking soon.
301. Q. Are we finished?
302. Ms Lampard: I think so. Thank you.

*[Interview concluded]*