

BROOK HOUSE INQUIRY

First Witness Statement of **D1876**

I, **D1876** **DPA** will say as follows:

Introduction

1. I am providing this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006. The facts stated within this statement are within my own knowledge and belief save where otherwise stated. This witness statement has been prepared with my solicitors Deighton Pierce Glynn (“DPG”) over the phone and in person, with the assistance of an interpreter.
2. I am a Ukrainian national with **Sensitive/irrelevant** belief. I speak Ukrainian and Russian. I speak only a little English.
3. I am told by my solicitors that Home Office records show that I was detained under immigration powers from 15 March 2016 and held in prison. I was moved to Brook House Immigration Removal Centre (“Brook House”) on 5 October 2016 and held there until 25 April 2017 when the Immigration Tribunal granted bail. At the time I was detained in 2016, I could not speak English at all.
4. I was detained again under immigration powers from 27 December 2018 and held in prison. I was moved to Brook House on 15 January 2019 and held there until 3 September 2019 when I was released on bail by the Home Office.

Recognised victim of trafficking

5. I am recognised by the Home Office as a victim of trafficking. I was deceived by an organisation into coming to the UK in 2015. I thought I would be given lawful

employment but I was made to work in construction where I received little to no money and any pay which I received went straight to a man who constantly threatened me. I was forced to live in inhumane and crowded conditions with others like me. My traffickers began harassing and threatening my mother back in Ukraine to sell her house to pay off the debt I owed to them for bringing me to the UK. Eventually my traffickers said I owed £25,000 due to the interest that had accumulated on the original cost to come here. One night when I was in London the organisation tracked me down, followed me home, forced their way through my front door, and stabbed me in my flat. I did not report this to the police or seek medical attention because I was terrified.

6. My claim to be a victim of trafficking was initially refused by the Home Office on 13 April 2017. However, on 2 April 2019 my immigration solicitors requested a reconsideration of my claim [DPG000033] providing a Medico Legal Report dated 4 March 2019 written by Dr Satinder Sahota, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist, after he interviewed me at Brook House [DPG000031]. Six months before my release from Brook House his report warned as follows:

Detention is not an appropriate environment for a victim of trafficking who suffers from psychological trauma as per Home Office and Shaw guidelines. D1876 Adjustment Reaction is unlikely to improve while he is in detention and prolonged detention may result in a Depressive Episode or Prolonged Adjustment Disorder. He is not neglecting or harming himself, and the risk of prolonged detention is therefore predominantly to his health. I foresee a deterioration in the event of prolonged detention with a number of possible outcomes namely, delay in recovery, worsening of post traumatic symptoms and emergence of a mental disorder requiring formal psychiatric or psychological treatment. [paragraph 4.1.31 of report]

7. My immigration solicitors sent a letter on 17 April 2019 explaining I should be considered a 'Level 3 Adult at Risk' and sought my release [DPG000035]. On 9 May 2019 my immigration solicitors sent the Home Office a report by Ms Elizabeth Flint [DPG000032], an expert on trafficking which concluded that in her opinion I was likely a victim of human trafficking [DPG000036].

8. On 28 August 2019 the Home Office made a positive Reasonable Grounds decision – that there were reasonable grounds to believe that I am a victim of trafficking [HOM032518]. I was released from detention on 3 September 2019 shortly after that decision. Over a year later, and only after my immigration solicitors threatened legal proceedings, the Home Office made a positive Conclusive Grounds decision – concluding that I am a victim of trafficking.
9. As I will explain, I found detention at Brook House during both periods of detention to be very traumatic. The living conditions were very bad and I experienced awful treatment.
10. Since leaving Brook House I continue to live with a sense of fear and anxiety that I did not have before I entered Brook House. I suffer from anxiety and depression and get bad headaches in a way I never did before immigration detention. Whenever I see flashing police vehicle lights and hear police sirens, I immediately feel fear because they make me think about authorities and power and remind me of immigration detention. Sometimes when I see a G4S minibus I get a panic attack. I have traumatic memories of Brook House which are difficult to deal with and I still suffer nightmares about my time at Brook House. I am prescribed anti-depressants and medication for my depression and to help me sleep but this does not always work. I now work with a psychologist.
11. Providing instructions for this witness statement was very difficult for me and frequently brought me to tears as I recalled events and memories that I have tried to forget. The more I talk about what I experienced the more I remember.
12. My immigration solicitors advised me to keep a journal of what was happening the second time I was detained at Brook House. Although I did so, for reasons I will explain below, only some of my journal entries remain in my possession and my journal is in the Ukrainian language.

Induction process

13. I do not remember any specific induction process when I was detained in 2016. I do not remember being given any formal explanation of the detention centre, a tour, or an

explanation of how I could access a solicitor or doctor. Instead, it was the other detainees who explained how things work at Brook House and it was through them that I learnt how to access these services.

Physical environment

Detention Wings

14. The first time I was detained in Brook House, on 13 March 2016, I was accommodated on B Wing for two weeks. B Wing is where incomers are kept so that officers can observe them and their behaviour before allocating them to a wing for the longer term. I felt very lost and confused and no one was there who spoke both Ukrainian and English. There was only one other person who spoke Ukrainian on the wing but he did not speak English.
15. After two weeks on B Wing, I was moved to C Wing where I stayed for one and a half weeks. I speak Ukrainian and Russian. However, nobody in C Wing spoke either language so I felt extremely isolated, especially as I needed to rely on other detainees to understand how to access healthcare, the library and the other facilities. Eventually, I met another Ukrainian from another wing when I was given outdoor time and he helped me write a letter to the officers asking to be moved to another Wing with detainees who also spoke Ukrainian or Russian. I was then moved to D Wing for about three months. After about three months on D Wing all the other Russian or Ukrainian speakers had either been deported or released so then I was moved to A Wing.
16. On A Wing I was accommodated with another detainee for three weeks. This was a very difficult environment as he smoked a lot of spice in the cell so it was hard to breathe. A Ukrainian friend of mine in detention, [D1664], was living with a Polish man who was also on A Wing. When this Polish man was deported [D1664] asked if I could move in with him and the officers allowed it. In order to make this request, I needed to pay another detainee in coffee or tobacco to write my request in English for me. I stayed on A Wing with [D1664] for about 6 months until he was released.

17. After [D1664] was released I believe I was moved to C Wing but I cannot remember exactly how long this was for. I was then moved several more times after that between Wings. By the time of my release from Brook House in April 2017 I was on D Wing.
18. When I was detained in 2019 I was accommodated in a cell on C Wing, D Wing and then C Wing again. I was also twice isolated on E Wing which I will explain later.

The Cells

19. I find it difficult to remember the details of the cells, but I know there were times I was in a cell with two beds and times I was in a cell with three beds.
20. In addition to the beds, generally cells had a TV, a sink, a kettle and 1-2 chairs depending on the cell. Between the two beds there was a piece of furniture that was something between a table and a shelf, which had a depth of about 30 cm and a length of about 120 cm. In cells with three beds there was a bunk bed on one side of the room and a single bed on the other side. Triple bedrooms had a second table where two people could sit to eat. There was generally also a table under the TV, which was on the wall. As far as I could tell, the TV did not have any channels in any language other than English.
21. I found it very difficult to stay for long periods in the cells. There was not much room to walk around – about a meter between the beds. The toilet was also in the cell separated only by a curtain. In some cells where I stayed the curtain was missing. I found it really uncomfortable and humiliating to use the toilet with someone else right there. There was no privacy. When possible, I would wait for my cellmate to leave before using the toilet.
22. The sinks in the cells operated by pressing a button, which would allow water to flow before stopping after a short time. In some cells, after pressing the button about six times water would stop entirely for 10 or so minutes. There were no plugs for the sink so, if I wanted to shave, I had to place something in the bottom to block the sink in order to keep the water in the basin. I could not shave in the shower because there was no mirror. The mirror above the room in the sink was very dirty and not clear but it was better than no mirror at all. This sink was also the source of our drinking water so it could be frustrating

to get enough water from the sink as the water would not flow for long. Other detainees also had this problem.

23. The mattresses were made of a waterproof textile that was very cold and we were allocated only one blanket each which was very thin. This generally meant that I was extremely cold in the night. When a detainee was released or deported other detainees would use their blanket for extra warmth. Some officers would leave the sheet and blanket when someone left, possibly as an act of kindness. Others would take them. While I was in detention the second time I managed to get a second blanket which helped a bit.
24. When detainees were moved from wing to wing, we had to take our mattress, pillow and blanket with us; these items would not be provided for us on the new wing. Officers would hold the door for you while you carried your mattress and belongings, but they would not help.
25. There was a vent in the toilets which sucked air in and a vent in the cells that blew air out. I had problems with the vent in my cell which I describe later.

Daily routine

26. During my detention at Brook House detainees were locked in the cells for 11 hours every night from around 9:00 pm to 8:00 am. We were also locked in our cells before lunch and dinner. Sometimes this was for 30 minutes, sometimes 40 minutes and sometimes longer. If a fight broke out between detainees or there was some other incident the time spent in our cells could be extended until the problem was resolved. During these long periods spent in my cell, I just remember wanting freedom so much. The window in the room had long thick bars and the gaps between the metal bars were very small. The cell windows did not open and so provided no ventilation.
27. In terms of facilities, I remember there was a pool table, table tennis, a library, a gym and drawing classes. I do not recall anything else.

28. I found it difficult to access healthcare services, which I will speak about later. It was also sometimes difficult to receive information from outside Brook House. There were two types of letters I received: letters given to me on the wing and letters that arrived at reception. The letters given to me on the wing were 'internal letters' such as responses to my complaints or letters from G4S. I was allowed to keep these letters. The letters I received at reception were 'external letters' such as letters from my solicitors or from the hospital. When I received private 'external' letters the officers would show me the letter to read and then confiscate it. This meant there was no opportunity to have the letters from the hospital or my solicitors translated or to find out what they said so I did not know what was going on.
29. When an 'external' letter arrived for me, I was taken to reception where normally the officers would open my letter in front of me and I would be asked to sign the letter to confirm receipt. They would then place the opened letter back in the envelope and keep it. When I complained, the officers told me I could have the letters back on release. I don't know why this was the case. I never had a translator, they never explained to me why and I don't even know if this was the same for all detainees or only me.
30. I remember that once I began arguing with the officers about the fact that I could not understand the letter unless they let me keep it and get it translated. I also said they should not be reading my personal documents. Eventually they made a copy of a letter for me, but they still kept the original and the envelope. On another occasion when I began arguing I grabbed my letter and tore the whole thing up, not because I knew what it said, but because I did not think the officers should be able to look at my personal documents.
31. Each detainee was given a phone to use. I was given a small phone that was not a smartphone. I think it was a Nokia. This made it easy enough to communicate with people outside of Brook House as long as you could buy phone credit. Since I worked in the kitchen at Brook House for £1 per hour, I had enough money to pay for credit. The biggest problem I had was the phone signal, which seemed to come and go. There were some cells where you could not get any signal at all. Most of the time I would walk around watching the phone signal bars go up or down on my phone trying to find a place to take a call. Sometimes going as close as I could to my cell window helped. On several

occasions, calls with my solicitor were interrupted early or failed altogether because the connection was too unstable. I cannot remember the exact number of times my connection was too unstable for phone calls, but it was most of the time.

Interpreters

32. I was rarely provided a translator or interpreter at Brook House and this was extremely difficult. I cannot remember exactly but I do not think G4S provided an interpreter more than about three times. Once they gave me a Ukrainian interpreter and the other two times the interpreter spoke Russian. I recall being provided with a Russian interpreter on one of the occasions when I was refusing to eat. They only provided the interpreter after I approached a Ukrainian detainee and a Latvian detainee who spoke Russian and asked them to help me submit a complaint in exchange for coffee and tobacco. My complaint explained I was on hunger strike because officers used force against me, which I will speak about more below. After I submitted my complaint, an older manager provided a Russian interpreter and asked me questions. This occasion is clear in my mind as I recall the interpreter would only allow me to reply “yes” or “no” while they showed me a menu and asked me which food I would eat. The other times I refused to eat there was no point at which I was provided with an interpreter.
33. The Home Office also provided an interpreter when I was given monthly progress reports, but many of these interpreters were not good. There was a particular Russian interpreter I got on several occasions who would also translate whatever I said as “yes” or “no” so I didn’t have any opportunity to elaborate and it made me feel like I didn’t really have a voice.
34. The lack of translators made it hard to communicate my needs to immigration officers, doctors and nurses. If I wanted to say something, I needed to find a detainee to interpret for me. This meant I had no privacy when it came to my medical concerns, immigration concerns, or complaints. I sometimes found it difficult to not have privacy but finding detainees to translate was the only way I could get help. I understand some Polish and a little English. Sometimes the detainees I found to interpret for me spoke Ukrainian or Russian, but sometimes they spoke Polish and so they would try to translate the English

to me in Polish. My Polish is limited but I would do my best to figure out most of what they were saying in Polish.

35. Sometimes there were no other detainees available who could speak Ukrainian, Russian or Polish. On these occasions I would ask another detainee to help where our only common tongue was English, but other detainees could understand my very broken English, while the officers could not understand me or would not take the time to try and understand me. If there was no one at all who was available to help I would just repeatedly try to explain myself as best I could in English in different ways, but some officers were frequently very rude and hostile. It depended on the officer. I recall once asking a female officer for something in English. When she could not understand what I was asking for she yelled "where is your fucking English?" at me.
36. Most of the time I had to 'pay' the other detainees to interpret for me. Detainees would normally agree to interpret for half a packet of tobacco and some single use sachets of coffee or tea. There is a shop in Brook House where you can buy these items with a special card. Each detainee is given one of these cards on arrival and credited £0.71 onto the card every 24 hours. It cost £0.11 for one sachet of instant coffee, but I cannot now remember the cost of tobacco. I had more credit than other detainees because I worked as a kitchen porter at Brook House. I will talk about working at Brook House later.
37. One of the women who worked in the shop spoke Russian, but the officers would not let her speak Russian to Russian-speaking detainees. Polish detainees also told me that a Polish woman working at the shop said she was not allowed to speak Polish to them. We would get supplies like toothpaste, soap and shampoo from the Wing office. If I wanted something there and I did not know the word in English I would point to it.
38. Communicating medical problems was the most difficult part. If I wanted to say something I needed to pay a detainee with items from the shop to interpret for me. If you wanted to speak with a GP first you needed to speak to a nurse, and to speak to the nurse, there was a queue. This meant that just to make an appointment with the doctor I needed to pay someone to queue with me and explain my medical problems to the nurse. As mentioned, this meant that I had no privacy around my medical problems.

39. Not having access to interpreters could also be very scary. Often officers would be attempting to communicate something very important and I would have no idea what they were asking. I was once accused of having drugs in my cell and officers were telling me they had an order to check the room. With the help of another Ukrainian I told them I do not smoke, that they could check the room but that if they found any drugs they would not be mine. When asked, the manager told me there were orders from top management to do the check. I was very lucky that on that occasion there was another detainee who could help me but that was down to luck.

Working at Brook House

40. I worked as a kitchen porter at Brook House during both periods that I was detained. My salary was £1 per hour and my job was to clean and wash dishes. Once a week we did general cleaning. There were two shifts. You could work either for 6 hours in the morning or for 3 hours in the afternoon. You could work for up to 30 hours per week. I was very good at my job, so the kitchen staff always wanted me to work.
41. Some of the kitchen staff treated the detainees who worked there unfairly. They would eat lots of food on shift in front of us, but only let detainees like me have very little. I saw kitchen staff steal food from Brook House to take home.

Sleeping

42. Sleeping at Brook House was very difficult and there was always a lot of noise. Each cell had a button you could press when you need to speak to an officer. This creates a very loud sound which continued once you called them until they picked up. They often did not pick up for 5 minutes or more and once it was even 30 minutes. The noise woke everyone up and then detainees got very frustrated, so they started banging on their doors. This in turn created a huge metallic noise which echoed loudly.
43. The cells opened onto landings and an open stairwell. Sounds really reverberated so even without the call button system it was very noisy in the night. The officers would make a lot of noise by slamming doors and whistling as they walked past the door. Sometimes the detainees would begin shouting too, telling the officers to shut up. At times the noise the officers made was so loud it seemed it was deliberate in order to disturb detainees.

The cell doors were on a big hinge and had no handle on the inside, so if an officer came in at night there was this huge bang when the door slammed shut.

44. I remember once I needed to ask for painkillers for my stomach. It created such a commotion. I used the call button, and then there was banging by detainees because the officer did not attend for about 30 minutes. When the officer finally came, he promised to call the nurse. I waited a long time, but the nurse did not come, so I had to press the button again. The officer returned when I called the second time and said the nurse was busy, but that she would come later. About 30 minutes later, I used the call button a third time. Throughout this time detainees were banging and there was lots of noise.
45. Eventually the nurse came, but after all this, she said she would not give me anything because the doctor had not prescribed me any medication. I was in so much pain and I was so scared that I thought of cutting myself with my razor. A manager came to try to calm me down and to confiscate my razor. The manager told me they could not do anything because a doctor did not prescribe me painkillers so they could not give me any and then he left. Nobody checked on me the next day, but I went to healthcare, but I was still not given anything for my pain. I was just told I should see a doctor. I felt so sick that night. The echoing noise, the psychological pressure from the banging and the whistling – it was all too much.
46. I often felt scared at Brook House. Especially after force was used against me in March 2019, which I will speak about later. I felt targeted by some members of staff who often tried to intimidate me. They did this in different ways. Firstly, after force was used against me, there was an increased number of checks in my cell. I needed other detainees to interpret and explain to the officers that I did not have drugs in my cell. Also, some officers would come and turn on the lights in my cell at night while I was trying to sleep. I found this very intimidating and do not recall them doing this before the use of force.
47. There was also a window on the cell doors with a metal flap, which covered the window. After force was used against me some officers walking along the landing at night while I was sleeping would slam the metal cover against the door as they passed by my cell. I remember I placed paper soaked in soap around the edges of my window to make sure the area was lubricated or cushioned so the noise was not as loud when they slammed the

flap, but the officers took it off. I do not know the officers who were doing this. When they woke me up, I was always terrified. My whole body would shake. They would say that they were just checking on me but sometimes they would laugh at my scared reaction. I did not feel like I was being treated like a human being.

48. I remember being woken up by one of the staff members in this way at around 1.00 am one night and the next night it happened again at 5.15am. I was terrified as I did not know what was going on. My legs, arms and hands were shaking. The second time I asked the officer what he was doing and said it was not normal to keep doing this and he laughed at me. I told him that I was going to complain about him and he laughed again and told me to speak to a manager. I asked if I could speak to a manager but the officer told me that the manager did not begin work until 9.00am. I persisted and eventually I spoke to someone called Steve and explained that I kept on being woken in the middle of the night and that this was scaring me. I showed him how my whole body was shaking and I was being laughed at. I told him that my heart was hurting from the stress. Steve calmed me down and offered me some time to go out and have a cigarette.
49. The next morning I went with my friend [D1384] who helped translate for me so that I could raise the issue with another manager called Steven. I told him how scared I was at night and how each time they woke me up I would shake because I did not know what was happening. After that they stopped for a while but then they started again and it got even worse.

Access to Legal Services and Support from GDWG

50. When I was detained in 2017 I think I was represented by Lawrence Lupin solicitors and in 2019 I was represented by Duncan Lewis solicitors although I do not remember it well.
51. Lawrence Lupin emailed a charity called the Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group (GDWG) for me when I was detained in 2017. Mostly I was assisted by Naomi, who I thought was from the Red Cross but who my solicitors informed me is almost definitely Naomi Blackwell of GDWG. She would give me £5 credit for phone calls, send me clothes, talk to lawyers and do whatever she could to help. When I was detained again in 2019, I was

assisted by someone named Daniel who I think also worked for the Red Cross or perhaps GDWG. He helped me in the same way Naomi did. I believe Daniel also referred me to Duncan Lewis solicitors.

52. It was very hard to contact my solicitors because of the poor signal in Brook House. I could not text my solicitors the way I texted Daniel and Naomi because they only had landlines. I therefore usually had to send a fax. I would do this first by paying someone to translate a message to my solicitor in English, asking them to set up a phone call. I would fax this handwritten message to my solicitor. As I mentioned above, sometimes I could not get phone signal or the connection dropped while I was on the call.

Treatment

General treatment by detention officers

53. In general, the detention officers at Brook House treated the detainees extremely badly. The officers had absolutely no respect for the detainees and would use abusive or bullying techniques. For example, when they conducted body searches they would be very disrespectful and forceful.
54. The officers would frequently create situations which would lead to conflict between the detainees or place a lot of psychological pressure on us. For example, I remember one period when the Russian and Ukrainian detainees were moved so that they would be sharing cells and this was exactly when there was a lot of tension between the two nations. It did not feel like a coincidence. I really think that the officers knew that this would spark conflict and tension. I was moved into a cell with a Russian detainee who started swearing at me and would try to start a fight with me. Sometimes I would refuse to go into my cell to avoid him but this always involved a risk that the officers would forcibly return me to my cell. I remember that when I was in that cell, I felt afraid of my cellmate. There was also another Russian on the same wing who was friends with my cellmate. I was frightened of him too. I am not sure now, but I think Naomi helped me with this situation.

55. Some detainees were treated worse than others. There was a young man in detention who was 23 who was treated particularly badly by the officers. I don't know where he was from because he did not speak to anyone. He always kept to himself and never participated. The officers would frequently tell him off in a very aggressive way for smoking cigarettes even though other detainees and detention officers would smoke. Officers would smoke e-cigarettes in the office on the main floor, or they would smoke cigarettes in groups of up to around five in the courtyard. When smoking in the courtyard officers had to hide by the tent so they could not be seen because they were not to hang around in groups like that.
56. I remember once I was on the second floor in D Wing in the area where the pool table is. The 23 year-old man was there too. While the others were playing pool, he only watched. I then saw the manager come up to him and tell him off for smoking a cigarette. It was an ordinary cigarette. Technically detainees are told we should not smoke ordinary cigarettes and tobacco in the common area – only outside or in our cells – but in practice, whether a detainee got in trouble for smoking depended on who the detainee was and on which officer was involved. Often officers would pass by and do nothing when they saw a detainee smoking. On this occasion I watched the officer tell the 23-year-old off, and I also saw the 23-year-old put out his cigarette. Not long after, for no reason insofar as I could see, officers started twisting his arm and forcing him into his cell while other officers were dispersing everyone else at the same time. I have no idea why they did that. He was such a quiet person. I don't understand why they picked on him. With other people who were smoking spice, not cigarettes, officers would sometimes say 'stop smoking' and then keep walking without stopping or returning. Like I said, it depended on who the detainee was, and on the officer.
57. On another occasion I believe the detention officers placed this same young man in isolation for two months. Once while I was in the corridor, he got into trouble for smoking a cigarette and was taken away to E Wing. After this, I did not see him again. Two months later, when I myself was taken to E Wing, this young man was still there. I could not speak to him because he was in the part of E Wing where detainees are kept under constant supervision. I believe having so much time in E Wing must have affected him psychologically because I could hear him screaming and banging his head or something else.

58. I have already mentioned the way some officers treated me because I speak little English and how some officers dealt with my private letters. Additionally, each detainee had a locked box under their bed which could be opened with a key to store personal items. I kept all my papers neatly stored in a plastic folder in my box. Some of the papers were reports, others were journal entries of my time at Brook House. The officers would see me writing and crying and I think they knew I was keeping a journal. On 31 August 2019, when I was taken to E Wing, I did not get to take my papers with me. I was taken off E Wing on 2 September 2019 and released from detention on 3 September 2019. On release I was given a sealed evidence bag of my papers, but some of them were missing. Some missing papers were my journal entries, others were character references to help me with bail. Nobody has a key to your box except you and the officers, so I think the officers who emptied my box in preparation for my release must have removed some of the papers. If I wasn't taken to E Wing, I would have been able to protect my papers and retrieve them myself. I still have copies of the journal entries and papers that were returned to me.
59. In general I felt very bullied and threatened while I was in Brook House. Sometimes bullying came from other detainees, for example the Russian-speaker I had to share a cell with and the cellmate who tried to suffocate me (which I explain later in this statement). Other times it came from interpreters who were not properly translating for me, or kitchen staff who treated me unfairly. Often this bullying or threatening behaviour came from the officers themselves. As far as my treatment by officers was concerned, this was worse after force was used against me because then I felt that the officers involved were particularly intimidating towards me. I was very scared and did not feel safe.

Use of Force

60. I found the use of force in Brook House shocking. The detention officers were physically abusive towards me and other detainees.

Use of Force against me

First occasion – 11 March 2019

61. The first occasion force was used against me was in March 2019. This is referred to in a letter dated 9 May 2019 my immigration solicitors sent to the Home Office [DPG000036]. It all started because of problems with the temperature in a new cell I had been moved to on Friday 8 March 2019. Heating to the cell was from a vent through which warm air was meant to be blown into the cell but instead the air was very cold. It was so cold in my cell that I felt I should not stay there. The other detainees also said that their vents were only blowing cold air and they also complained. I wondered whether this was being done intentionally to make the detainees feel cold.
62. Sometimes I would place some newspaper over the ventilator to partially block the air, securing it with toothpaste in each corner but often it would blow off and if an officer saw the newspaper they took it down. On Saturday 9 March and Sunday 10 March 2019 I tried to get assistance as I was worried about my health given how cold it was and how long I had to spend confined to my cell. I told the manager, Adam, that the heating wasn't working and that it was blowing in cold air and he told me it would be fixed on Monday. By Sunday, I had developed a bad headache, a cold and earache, which I believe was due to, or worse by, the cold in my room.
63. I reminded officers about the vent on Monday morning 11 March 2019 but by the end of the day it still hadn't been fixed and the cell was very cold. I went to the office and explained to the officers again about the problem with the heating and that my room was extremely cold. There were two people in the office, a woman – who was called Christi – and Adam the manager. They told me that they had left a message with the plumber and that they would contact them again. Adam, the manager, spoke to me with [DX1] another detainee who interpreted the conversation as he could also speak English. [DX1] does not speak Ukrainian or Russian or even Polish but he understood 'my English' and Adam did not. Adam, the manager, came into my cell and agreed that it was extremely cold. He checked it against the cell of [DX1] a detainee living in the next cell, and agreed that although his room was cold mine was even more cold.
64. I waited until around 5.00pm or 6.00pm that day, 11 March 2019, and reminded Adam again that my room was very cold. He then said that nothing could be done that day as it was the end of the day. I decided that I would not go back into my cell while it was so cold. I told the officers, with the help of [DX1] that I planned to not go into my room

because of the broken heating and they just said “Okay”. After that we had our evening meal.

65. Normally there is shut down from about 8.30 – 8.45pm. This is when we are meant to go back into our cells and generally the officers get angry if we do not go back into our cells on time. I went upstairs but I did not go into my cell. Many other detainees were trying to help me and telling the officers why I was not going to go into my cell – that it was too cold because the heating was broken. This included an Albanian detainee who was in a nearby cell.
66. The officers continued shutting down the cells until everyone had gone inside except myself. I was standing outside my cell when three officers approached me. Adam, the manager, was also there and he told me to get into my room. I refused and explained that I had a cold and had been waiting for the heating to be fixed for a long time and so I was not going to back into my cell. They said something to me so I asked for an interpreter because I could not understand what they were saying but they did not provide one.
67. The officers approached me and held onto me and restrained me. I grabbed the stair rail with my left hand. I saw Adam turn his body camera on – this happened after I asked for an interpreter – the light on it was green so it must have been on. Other detainees, who were in their cells, started to bang on their doors loudly. They knew that it was very cold in my room and that the officers should not have been using force so they were banging on their doors as a form of protest.
68. I think there were two officers on my right, one behind me holding my head and one or two officers on my left, but I now find it difficult to remember. I know Adam was on my left. I kept both my hands on the railing, which was like a pipe. I was trying not to let go, but eventually they pulled me away from it, at which point I clasped both my hands together in front of my body so the officers could not pull my arms back. Adam said something which I could not understand. He put his finger through the inside of my left hand, which was still entwined in my right, and twisted my left finger very sharply. It was so painful that I released my hands. He was then able to twist my left arm back behind my body. He did this so forcefully I felt a strong click in my left shoulder and experienced extreme pain. The officers then pulled my right arm back too. I don’t know if

this was also Adam or if it was someone else. I tried to make clear I was in pain but the officers reacted by increasing the pressure on my arm causing further pain and they continued to restrain me in this way even when I started crying and begging the officers to release me because it was so painful.

69. There was another officer standing behind me and holding my head so that I could not move. It felt like the officer holding my head was trying to twist it. He was holding my head very firmly and pushing me hard. It was painful and later I had marks on my neck from how forcefully he was holding me. I was then handcuffed and taken to isolation in E Wing. My solicitors tell me that the Rule 40 report states that this incident took place on Clyde Wing, that handcuffs were applied and I was stood up and my head released and that I then walked compliantly from Clyde Wing to the CSU where my handcuffs were removed.
70. On E Wing I was locked in a cell. Another manager, Steve, was there and he took my handcuffs off. I told him what had happened and complained that the force used on me had not been normal. There was a male nurse on E Wing who said that I needed to be seen by a doctor. I asked them to take pictures of the marks on the back of my neck. One of the officers came with a camera but I can't remember if he took any photos or not. They gave me painkillers. I was kept in isolation on E Wing overnight but could not sleep due to the pain. There was an officer next to the door who was watching and taking notes all the time.
71. The next day the director of the centre came to visit me. There were some other officers there but I cannot remember how many. I explained what happened as well as I could in English. I then suggested they ask [DX2] to translate. They brought [DX2] to E Wing and they had a conversation. I think [DX2] explained what had happened to the officers but I don't really know what the conversation was as I don't speak good English.
72. At around midday I was taken to East Surrey Hospital and the nurses spoke to the detention officers and asked how I had been injured. I listened to this conversation and understood the officers to say that they had been acting according to instructions. They were asking me what happened, but I was not given an interpreter and I could not express myself well. As far as I could tell, they were taking what the officers said at face

value without questioning anything. They did an X-Ray and I was provided co-codamol, a painkiller, and my shoulder was placed in a sling.

73. I have seen my medical records that say I was diagnosed with a left arm clavicle (collar bone) injury and would need a follow up appointment [DPG000026]. My follow-up appointment at hospital was meant to be on 19 March 2019, but I was not taken because, as I understood it, healthcare at Brook House did not have the right paperwork. I returned to healthcare every day about my pain but I did not feel like they listened to me. My records show that when I returned to hospital on 26 March 2019 I was diagnosed with a left shoulder nonspecific pain and a Brachial Plexus (network of nerves in the shoulder) injury and my arm was placed in a sling [DPG000027]. An MRI scan was requested for both the brachial plexus and collar bone injuries and I was prescribed neuromodulators to take if the pain worsened.
74. Several times I was not taken in for MRI appointments, and once I was taken to hospital but there was a fault with the MRI scanner, before finally the MRI went ahead on 7 June 2019. It was very hard waiting for the MRI scan because I was not told when it would take place. I was frequently asking when it was scheduled for and I found the uncertainty really challenging as it felt like healthcare was not progressing my treatment. I found this period of time very stressful and upsetting and my medical records show that I was considering talking therapy.
75. I continued to have problems with my left shoulder which was very painful and tender. I visited healthcare about this regularly. I could not sleep on my left shoulder for at least six months and I had a burning sensation over my left arm and shoulder. If I accidentally rolled over or put any weight on my left shoulder in the night I would wake up from the pain. I was also concerned as my left arm felt a lot weaker after being in a sling for so long and I went to healthcare about that.
76. After the 11 March 2019 incident I felt even less safe in detention. I felt bullied and threatened and was afraid of some of the staff. I was particularly afraid of the manager, Adam, who caused my shoulder injury in the first place. I felt like he was trying to get his revenge on me because I had complained about the incident. On one occasion in April 2019 I went outside for a cigarette at around 6.30 pm. I realised that I had left my

cigarettes in my room and went back for these. As I returned, I saw Adam in my room. He was wearing gloves that officers normally wear when they are checking behind the rubbish or checking the toilet. He was using them to check personal items on my desk including my bible, keys and food. I was upset that he was using dirty gloves to go through my things. I asked him what he was doing in my room as I had just left it to have a cigarette. He said he was just checking on something. I asked him what he was checking and said that this was not normal behaviour. He began to try and provoke me into becoming angry. At some stage he left the room and I closed the door. He came into the room again and continued to try to provoke me. Once he had made me angry he switched on his body camera, but I knew what he was doing. I asked him to leave. I knew what he was doing was wrong because normally checks are done in pairs. He did not seem to want to leave. I might have threatened to complain to Steve, the manager, but I cannot remember. When he left, I closed my door again.

77. The next day I went to speak to a manager with my friend D1384 who helped me translate. I told the manager about what had happened, and that the manager, Adam had been in my room alone. I explained that I did not feel safe and that Adam was angry with me and I was scared what he would do. I said that he could have been trying to plant drugs or something while I was not there to get me in to trouble. The manager agreed that he should not have been in my room alone and said that he would speak to Adam. I think speaking to the manager helped a little. There were no other major incidents with Adam afterwards, although Adam continued to look at me in a threatening way, which I found intimidating.
78. I felt awful after the officers used force against me. I felt like I was treated like an animal, there was no respect for me. I was in a lot of pain for many weeks and I was starting to think about hurting myself. My solicitors have shown me a Home Office note [HOM032511] which confirms that I was placed on ACDT on 3 June 2019.
79. I was again placed on ACDT on 22 June 2019 [HOM032511]. I remember that my shoulder still hurt a lot. I was so worried about my shoulder which was really painful and I had been going to healthcare a lot but was not getting any help from them. I was really struggling mentally and started to think about harming myself and this is why I was placed on ACDT.

80. It's been nearly three years now since the officers damaged my shoulder in this way. I can sleep but I can still hear and feel a click in my shoulder sometimes and it still causes pain, especially when the weather becomes very cold, hot or humid. Sometime around December 2021 I changed to a new GP as I did not feel my old GP was helping me. Already my new GP has given me new prescriptions for my depression and sleeping difficulty. I want to see them about pain management as well, but I find the system here very difficult to navigate. After giving up with my old GP, I privately purchased medicines from Ukraine for £25 for pain management called Diclac and Nimesil. These are helping me for now, especially the Nimesil, but eventually I will need to find a way to get help from my UK GP.

Second instance of force – 31 August 2019

81. The second occasion on which force was used on me by detention officers was shortly before I was released from detention. My solicitors (DPG) have told me the documents show the incident occurred on 31 August 2019 and that I was released on 3 September 2019. The incident occurred while I was staying on either C Wing or D Wing. An officer had told me the day before that I was going to be released. On the day force was used I was told to go to speak to an immigration officer on the visits corridor. When I arrived at the interview room on the visits corridor, there was one immigration officer in the room. He told me to sign a document. I refused because there was no interpreter present and I did not know what the document said. I had a bail hearing in a few days' time and I did not want to risk signing paperwork without knowing what it said.

82. The next thing I remember is seeing a male nurse appear with five officers who were wearing helmets and carrying shields. When I refused to sign the papers, the nurse was asked whether my health was ok. The nurse then told the officers something along the lines of 'his health is ok, do what you want with him.' I cannot remember whether the nurse stayed or left after that.

83. The document I was asked to sign was on a table. When I am asked to think about this experience my head starts to spin and the details are not there. I know that the next thing was that I ended up on the floor. I was crying and shouting in Ukrainian and English. I was holding onto the table leg. I remember a small officer with a moustache who

normally works in the visiting hall took down his balaclava (I think this is what he was wearing although I cannot now be sure of this) and started smiling and laughing at me in a really evil and vicious way. I have never seen anything like it. He then grabbed my left hand and began twisting it. It hurt so much I cried.

84. I don't know the name of the officer, but he was a young white man with short brown hair, which was distinct because it was parted down the middle. He also had a moustache. He was shorter than me, he worked in the visiting hall, and if I remember correctly, he had acne.
85. The officers carried me by my armpits straight to E Wing where I was kept for around two days on Rule 40. The Rule 40 report says this was to move me to Morton Hall IRC. This document confirms that I made comments that I was going to self-harm during the incident.
86. This time, instead of being behind a metal door, I was placed in a cell behind a door that was half glass and half metal. From the other side of the door, officers could see every move I made. An officer would sit in a chair opposite the door and watch me constantly. I was kept in that room for around two days, until 2 September 2019, and continued to be monitored. I was really, really scared of the detention officers. For several days after this incident, I refused to eat which I will speak about later.
87. My solicitors (DPG) have explained that the Home Office's GCID records show that the Home Office, acting as the Competent Authority, had on 28 August 2019 made a positive Reasonable Grounds decision that I might be a victim of trafficking [HOM032518]. The records show that the Home Office engagement officer at Brook House handed me the decision letter on 29 August 2019. I am told by my solicitors that they have not been provided with a complete copy of the GCID records but from those the Inquiry has provided it is clear that the Home Office was intending to release me and the only issue was the address I would be released to. I am told by my solicitors that despite the Home Office's intention to release me the Home Office had decided to move me to Morton Hall IRC in Lincolnshire.

88. I am told by my solicitors that records of GDWG show that on 31 August 2019 another detainee called the GDWG office on my behalf to say that I had been moved with force to E Wing in preparation for being moved to a different detention centre. The GDWG entry on their computer system for 31 August 2019 notes:

[D1876] called, through [redacted]. Yesterday HO told [D1876] they might be releasing him soon. Today they moved [D1876] forcibly to E Wing. Injured his hand along the way. Saying they are doing this in preparation for moving him to a difference centre. Said I would contact solicitor, though probably won't answer due to it being weekend. Solicitor didn't pick up, so I emailed. I tried calling HO, they didn't pick up. Tried calling detention liaison team. Eventually got through to Luke, who didn't want to tell me anything. Asked him to go see [D1876] - he eventually agreed. [D1876] called me when Luke arrived and asked me to translate. Luke said they want to release [D1876] but need contact details for the landlord of his property. After [D1876] hands these details over, it will take a few days to process for his release. He also said they will move [D1876] to Morton Hall for a few days before his release. I asked why, and Luke paused, and then said, "Operational reasons." [DPG000028]

89. My solicitors have shown me a Home Office entry on their GCID records that Brook House had notified the Home Office that an ACDT was opened on 31 August 2019 that day because I was having suicidal thoughts [HOM032519]. The entry was:

"ACDT opened as statement to suicide as was told that he was going to be transferred to Morton hall by suitable crew tomorrow and also for used [sic] and placed onto DC Rule 40 and Constant Supervision."

90. An entry on 1 September 2019 [HOM032519] records that I had been:

".. removed from Rule 40 today at 13.30pm. This is after his transfer to Morton hall was cancelled this morning. [D1876] is to remain in E wing pending a future move to Morton Hall. ACDT Remains open to support."

91. Another entry that day notes:

“ ..has been taken off constant supervision and his ACDT remains open on Hourly observations to help support him.”

92. On one night between 31 August 2019 and 3 September 2019, when I was under hourly observation, I could not sleep because of the pain from the force used against me, and then I heard a noise outside my door. I looked through the gap in the door and the doorframe and I saw at least three officers wearing balaclavas. I don't know how many there were total, but I definitely saw three. I was very scared because I thought that they came in the night to use force against me again. I was also worried they had come in the night to move me to a new detention centre. I remember my bail hearing was meant to be on Thursday, and I was sure moving would stop the hearing from going ahead. I called my friend [Name Irrelevant] on the phone; he has told me I made this call around 2:00 am. I explained what was happening, I said I was scared they were going to use force against me again.
93. [Name Irrelevant] gave me the number for the police, so I called the police. I tried to speak English, but I was struggling so the police provided me with an interpreter. I explained to the police officer that I am worried for my safety. I explained that the officers were going to use force against me. The police officer told me everything would be ok and that they would contact the Home Office. I believe the officers outside my door heard these conversations because generally you can hear people's conversations from outside the cell.
94. At some point shortly after I spoke to the police the duty officer opened the door. As best as I could in English, I told him I spoke to the police and informed them Brook House officers wanted to forcefully move me to another centre. The duty officer said something like 'don't worry it's ok.' But I was still very worried.
95. The next day, the detention centre sent a priest called [Name Irrelevant] who spoke Russian to my cell to calm me down while officers stood outside my cell. They probably sent [Name Irrelevant] because they wanted to know whether I was in a bad psychological state. I explained to [Name Irrelevant] that I was worried they were trying to forcefully move me to a new detention centre. After this, nobody touched me anymore, but of course this was not long before I was released.

96. An entry on 3 September 2019 [HOM032519] records that I was released that day.
97. I remember I was very scared when I was told I was going to be released because the last time they said they would release me they used force against me. So initially when they told me to get ready to be released I said I would not leave my cell. The officers said nobody would twist my hand this time and they said I could take someone with me. I took someone with me to interpret and I signed the papers for my release. They gave me 30 minutes to pack up and leave. I owed the detainee who accompanied and was interpreting for me. I tried to buy him tobacco, but they had already blocked my card at the shop and then the officer told me to leave as quick as I could.
98. The officers wanted to put me in a van to take me to the station but I did not trust them, so I refused. Adam was at reception and was one of the officers telling me to get in the van. Instead, I called my friend from detention, [Name Irrelevant] and waited for his neighbour who had a car to come and pick me up. Outside two officers from my wing and another officer were all smoking and watching me. The whole time I waited, the officers stood there and continued to watch me which I found very intimidating.
99. I do not understand why the Home Office were trying to move me to another detention centre when they were considering my release. After my release a friend took photos of the injuries caused by officers during the 31 August 2019 incident. I have the photos. They show the marks the officers left on me. I don't think the officers saw detainees as people.

Use of force by detention officers against other detainees

100. On one occasion in 2017 I witnessed detention officers be physically abusive towards another detainee. There were three floors in Brook House with a net across the landings to catch people if they jumped. I remember that a Polish detainee climbed onto the netting and sat there for a long period. At the time, he was on the third floor, and I was on the second floor; I could see through a gap between the door and doorframe in my cell and up through the netting to where the Polish man was standing on the netting at the floor above. The reason there is a gap between the door and doorframes in the cells is because instead of having ordinary hinges, the cell doors hinged on a pole, almost like a

pipe, that ran floor to ceiling. The rounded pole/pipe left a gap of approximately 0.5 cm between the door and the frame on the side of the door that hinged (not the side with a handle); the gap was wide enough that I could see what was happening that day. I could see the Polish man climb over the railing onto the netting. I could hear him talking about why he could not go back to Poland. From my understanding, he was due to be deported soon. He sat and lay on the netting and stayed there for hours. The officers began writing down his demands on some kind of big white board. At one point he used the bathroom while on the net and poo fell all the way down to the ground floor.

101. I could not see this part, but I later heard from other detainees that the detention officers took him from the netting using a lot of physical force. I could hear a lot of commotion and noise, so I believe this to be true. There is a separate staircase that only officers and employees use. Other detainees said, the Polish man was sitting on the netting close to the door to the officer-only staircase. They said it appeared almost like they jumped on him. A Russian detainee I knew who could see better told me that once the officers had the Polish man off the netting, they put tape around his legs and some kind of balloon or ball on his mouth to prevent him from screaming before dragging him away.

102. On another occasion, I think this was in 2019, I saw officers twisting the hand of another Ukrainian detainee in the corridor before taking him away by force, I think to E Wing. The Ukrainian was being deported but he had been writing letters explaining why he could not be deported. They placed him in handcuffs and with a belt around his body. When I saw detainees being transported like this, I felt like we were treated like cattle. Later that day he returned to the detention centre because the pilot had refused to fly until he had been removed from the plane. He told me that on the plane he was shouting and the officers were kicking him. People on the plane saw this and were recording it on their phone. He had really bad bruising after that incident all around his legs and on his hands.

103. When detainees were transported, we had one wrist in a handcuff connected to a belt, and the other hand free. The Ukrainian detainee told me that after being refused on the plane, the officers delayed taking him to the hospital. He had bad swelling and cuts on one wrist from the way the officers handcuffed him. While driving to the hospital the officers stopped somewhere and switched his handcuffs so that his other uninjured wrist was cuffed. They then waited for the redness and swelling to subside on his injured wrist

for about one hour before taking him into the hospital. They must have stopped very close by to the hospital because the detainee told me that once they began driving again, they reached the hospital within about five minutes.

104. I saw the detainees bruise myself. After that, he did not eat for at least two weeks. Nurses kept coming to weigh him and take his blood pressure.

105. I often witnessed force being used against others but these incidents I have described really stood out because they were so shocking. I felt like detainees were not seen as people. We were treated like animals.

106. There were often riots or protests at Brook House. The Albanians in detention were a particularly close-knit group. I remember on one occasion the second time I was in detention, all the Albanians decided together that they would not go back to their cells. An Albanian man explained this to me and invited me to join. I did not join and so once the commotion and force began, I was in my cell. The protest started at lunch time, and those not protesting were locked up. Around 10:00 or 11:00 pm additional officers arrived with dogs. At this time an officer and a manager came to my cell and teased me. The officer said something like *'come on, come take part in the protest'* and I said *'no.'* Behind them I saw other officers with shields and helmets. I know that the officers responded to the protesters with dogs as well because I could hear the sound of dogs. I was also told about this later by others who were part of the protest. I did not see some of the protesters again, but I heard from the same Albanian detainee who knew the protesters and who invited me to take part that some were taken to another detention centre and others to E Wing. Things did not quiet down that night until midnight and we did not get food until the evening, when, instead of a hot meal, we got packets of food to eat inside our cells.

107. Sometime later, when I was staying in D Wing, some people came to investigate the incident. I am not sure what body they belonged to, but whoever they were, it seemed to be their job to inspect incidents at Brook House. Someone senior from Brook House was also with them. These people spoke to the Albanian detainee who invited me to join the protest. He told them about the protest, but he also told them about me. He explained my injury and how Adam and others used force against me. At this point my arm was still in

a sling. I was called on and these people from outside spoke to me too. I am not sure if it was the same day or the next day, but very shortly afterwards, I was sent to the hospital again.

Violence from other detainees towards me – incident 3 February 2017

108. On 3 February 2017, whilst I was held on A Wing, I was attacked by my Russian cellmate. From the beginning there was tension between us and I felt unsafe sharing a room with him. He blamed Ukrainians for the war between our countries. I had been annoyed with him for not returning my mobile phone charger which he had borrowed. He became very aggressive and called me abusive names. He said I was racist and knocked me to the bed and started to suffocate me and push his fingers into my eyes. I was terrified. Since my arms were pinned down, I bit his cheek. He pushed his fingers into my mouth, so I bit his fingers in defence. Another detainee ran into my room and dragged him from me, though he continued to threaten to kill me and managed to hit me in the chest. Eventually the other detainee managed to pull my cellmate away. At the time I was so scared of my cellmate and so confused that I did not report the incident or my injuries to anyone. I had told officers before the attack that there is a war between our countries and I did not want to share a cell with him, but nobody listened. Later a detention officer saw my injuries and called me into his office to look at them and asked me what had happened. Initially I was reluctant to tell him because I was frightened my cellmate would kill me but eventually I told the officer what had happened.

109. However, instead of receiving support and protection from officers, I was placed on Rule 40 in segregation on the Care and Separation Unit for one day. I am told that the form authorising my removal from association records that I had allegedly assaulted my cellmate and that he had sustained injuries to his face and that the police had been notified [IMB000125_0003].

110. On 6 February 2017 the Home Office wrote to me to say that because of this incident I could no longer work in my job as a kitchen porter [IMB000125_0005]. An Armenian person in D Wing helped me by translating a complaint, which I dictated to him. He then passed the complaint to his wife to type up at her work. Finally, the complaint was then

sent on 8 February 2017. In the complaint I explained what had happened and asked if I could get my job back [IMB000125_0004].

111. I am told by my solicitors (DPG) that G4S have recorded on a spreadsheet [CJS001558] that they received my complaint on 10 February 2017, that it was investigated by manager, Stewart Povey-Meier, and ‘resolved’ on 28 February 2017 and ‘sent’ on 2 March 2017. The spreadsheet notes:

“A manager investigated the altercation at the time & concluded that appropriate action was taken. The complainant & the roommate said that the other person started the altercation & injuries were sustained during this. They both admitted to having a physical altercation with each other & the result of the investigation was that they both agreed it was a one-off incident. Appropriate measures were taken at the time to use Rule 40 which resulted in paid work opportunities being withdrawn.”

112. Both the Russian man and I were sent to E Wing, and after this we did not share a cell anymore. I do not think the officers responded appropriately. I needed support after what happened and instead, I was penalised. I did not need to be sent to E Wing, and I should not have had my work taken away. They should have listened to the concerns I raised about sharing with the Russian man before I was attacked and they should not have made me continue to share a cell with him.

113. Eventually my work was reinstated. At some point my complaint letter dated 8 February 2017 was passed to the IMB who on their form (which I am told by my solicitors is dated 22 February 2017) noted *“He is now back in work following ABS investigation internally. The fact that he is back on paid work in 20 days suggests that at worst both parties to the fight were equally culpable & possibly that D1876 was indeed a victim”*. [IMB000125_0001]. The IMB do not appear to have investigated my complaint any further than that. I am told by my solicitors that an IMB document prepared for the Inquiry notes that an IMB member *“Spoke to security and informed that detainee was now back in paid work following an internal investigation. Police had been informed of the altercation but no further action was taken by them. IMB states no requirement for further action.”* [IMB000001_0002].

Rule 35

114. I do not remember a Rule 35 report being conducted by a doctor but according to my records this was completed on 5 February 2019 and confirmed that I may be a victim of torture after an incident when I was stabbed by those who said I owed money for my journey to the UK [DPG000030]. My solicitors have explained to me that the Home Office apparently looked at the Rule 35 report but decided not to release me [HOM032516].

Food refusals

115. There were several occasions where I refused to eat. Sometimes I would refuse food for two or three days, other times for longer. Sometimes I refused food as a protest about lack of adequate healthcare. After the use of force incident on 31 August 2019 I refused food as a form of protest against how they had treated me. I only drank and refused to eat, although another detainee would sometimes secretly bring me pieces of bread in his pocket, which I would eat as I was very hungry, but I made sure that no officers knew I did this in order to make my point.

Drugs

116. There was a lot of drug use in Brook House, especially spice which a lot of detainees would take. Spice was used openly. Staff would witness detainees taking it and while some would stop them using it many would not respond or do anything about it. I remember a particular detainee would openly smoke spice and the staff would see but do nothing about it. The detainees would smoke cigarettes, cannabis and spice in the courtyard. There were officers around and some of them reacted, but many did not and would just allow the detainees to smoke drugs openly. I could smell that they were smoking drugs and would see officers passing by taking no action. I did not smoke drugs or take any drugs myself. I did smoke cigarettes and tobacco.

117. For a period of time at the end of 2016 I had to share a cell with someone who was using drugs heavily. I was staying in a three-person cell and was on the top bunk bed. I cannot recall whether the person in the single bed smoked as well, but the person underneath me

did and if the officers looked into the cell, they could not see what he was doing because the lighting was poor and the shade from the top bed covered him. Every time he smoked, the smoke went up and I felt like I was suffocating. Sometimes he had visitors and they would smoke too. Once it was so bad that I took my mattress, packed my stuff, and walked into the corridor with all my things asking to be transferred immediately. The officers didn't transfer me straight away. When I returned to my cell the smoker's friends who always visited and smoked said something like, '*you should not have walked out like that.*' They said it wasn't '*nice*' that I wanted to leave. They threatened that if I do something like that again, I will be in trouble as there will be a conflict between us. I was intimidated and scared. My solicitors advising me at that time contacted GDWG to say that this was affecting me. I am not sure how long after, but eventually the officers moved me.

118. While I was on A Wing in 2017 I worked in the kitchen and I witnessed a detainee dealing drugs on the wing. I strongly suspected that the drugs were brought to him by officers. I would see officers enter his cell then leave and shortly after other detainees would go into the cell and I would smell drugs coming from the cell. The detainees who bought the drugs would arrange for money to be transferred to a bank account outside the detention centre and once the money was transferred the detained person who was dealing in drugs would provide the drugs. I know this because my Ukrainian friend was being offered drugs and this is what dealers told him.

119. The drug dealer who was a detainee had lots of benefits because he was working with the detention officers. He had a smartphone which no one else had. Young prison officers would be really informal and matey with him and they would let him get away with behaviour that others could not get away with. The other detainees also used to bring him bags of food. While I worked with him in the kitchen he was released from detention and after that there were less drugs in the detention centre because they were not being supplied. This really gave me the impression that the officers were bringing in drugs for him to deal in the centre. Other detainees had this impression as well and people would talk about it.

120. People were frequently taking spice and overdosing. Detainees would fall over or lose consciousness because they were taking spice. The situation with drugs in Brook House

deteriorated, it was bad in 2017 but it was worse in 2019– drugs were used more openly and the officers would just ignore it. It was really scary to see everyone causing themselves harm in this way and the officers ignoring or allowing it.

Clinical Care issues

121.The healthcare was awful in Brook House. There was no mental health support and interpreters were rarely used making it very hard for me to explain any physical or mental health problems that I was experiencing.

122.On 14 January 2017 I made a complaint to the IMB [IMB000164] because of the problems I was having with healthcare. I often found healthcare difficult and on this occasion I went to see a doctor about a problem with my ears but felt that the way I was treated was racist because they did not provide me adequate pain relief. I felt like they were racist because I felt not listened to or taken seriously. I kept trying to say how much pain I was in, but nobody took the time to really listen to me. They would just nod and then ignore me.

123.I have also been asked to comment by the Inquiry on the detention review document from 11 March 2017 [HOM032255] which says that I had no medical conditions. I had already told the Home Office that my mental health was not good. I had been referred into the NRM on 3 February 2017 and had been placed on ACDT on 23 February 2017 because of my thoughts of self-harming.

124.On 29 March 2017 my solicitors at the time, Lawrence Lupin, sent a letter to the Home Office arguing that I should be released from detention and explaining that it was harming my mental and physical health [HOM032499_0030].

125.I have explained that officers caused injury to my left wrist and left shoulder during the use of force against me on 11 March 2019 and that I was taken the next day to Accident and Emergency. After I was brought back from hospital I was in such severe pain that I visited healthcare on an almost daily basis [DPG000025]. I could not sleep due to pain to my shoulder and my hand was very swollen, especially at night. Healthcare gave me codeine and later ibuprofen but that did not help much. They also told me that I had a follow up appointment at East Surrey Hospital but that they could not tell me when this

was. This was really horrible, being in a lot of pain and not knowing what follow up care I was going to have or when. On one occasion I was meant to go to the hospital for an appointment but I was told by officers that healthcare did not complete my escort documents so I was not taken.

126. After a follow up hospital appointment in March 2019 I was given stronger pain killers (codeine again), but this gave me stomach pain and diarrhoea. I went to healthcare about this but they did not seem interested in helping me. For a long time I found it difficult to sleep and if I rolled onto my shoulder I woke up in pain. I recall going to healthcare at Brook House in April after hearing my bone make cracking noises and feeling severe pain. They turned me away saying I was fine and just needed a massage. I was so frustrated about this that I started to refuse food because healthcare would not take me seriously. I was waiting many weeks for an MRI to my shoulder. My mental health suffered and I had thoughts of self-harm and suicide. As mentioned above, in April 2019, an ACDT was opened.

127. On 2 May 2019, while I was with a nurse to complain about a different problem, she noticed some blood coming out of my left ear. She asked if I had tried to clean my ear, and I told her that I had not. I told her it was very painful and it felt like there was liquid inside my ear. She asked if anything else was wrong, and I told her that I also have occasional heart pain, which I thought was due to the stress of being detained. In response, she gave me a two-page leaflet on how to deal with stress but did not check my ear or provide any treatment or advice for my ear or my heart pain.

128. GDWG [DPG000028] and my immigration solicitors Duncan Lewis [DPG000034] wrote to the healthcare centre at Brook House on my behalf about my shoulder pain. I was meant to have an MRI but appointments were cancelled without any explanation being given to me and I had to wait many weeks before I finally had an MRI. My solicitors (DPG) have told me that the MRI seems to have been performed on 7 June 2019 after it was cancelled various times by the hospital. Another ACDT was opened in June 2019.

129. Once during a video-link bail hearing that I attended from Brook House, I was feeling very unwell. I came out of the room. At the time, a nurse was walking through the

hallway, and she asked if everything was ok. I gestured to my heart and said, '*heart pain*,' but she just kept walking. She must have mentioned something to the officers because shortly after an officer came to me and told me to go back into the room as the video-link has not ended yet. Straight after the hearing, I decided to go to Healthcare, which was one floor up and through several corridors. When you go to Healthcare there is always an officer waiting on the inside of the door, who opens the door if you knock, but when I arrived I immediately passed out at the door of Healthcare. When I woke up next, I was in hospital.

130. I was kept overnight in the hospital and given tablets and an injection. I remember that my chest was burning like I had heart problems, but I do not know what my diagnosis was. The whole time I was handcuffed to the bed with a huge padlock. When I had to go to the toilet, the officers made me keep the toilet door partially open so they could keep an eye on me. They made me do this even though the toilet door opened direct into the hospital corridor and there were many other people sitting in the corridor and walking and everyone could see me use the toilet. They also made me keep one handcuff on with the other end attached to them while I used the toilet. The officers stayed with me at hospital the whole night too. They told me to sleep, but of course I could not sleep.

131. I am not completely sure, but I think that I was admitted to hospital on 10 July 2019 and discharged the next day. My medical notes from that admission show that I was admitted with central chest pain radiating to my left hand and that I was feeling sweaty with a sore throat, ongoing earache and a cough. The records show that I was diagnosed with Pericarditis and prescribed an anti-inflammatory medication.

132. When I said I felt unwell, the officers said to hospital staff they heard I was smoking cannabis and suggested that was why I was not well. However, I never smoked cannabis or took any other non-prescribed drugs. The officer suggested the hospital do a blood test to check for drugs. This test came back negative.

133. The next day when they took me back to Brook House, a manager named Steve who was with a nurse said I would not return to my previous cell and instead they would take me to E Wing.

134. I told them that I should not go to E Wing. Steve suggested I had been smoking cannabis and that they should do a blood test. I made clear that I do not smoke illegal drugs. I told them the hospital had already done a blood test for drugs, which had come back negative. No interpreter was present when I was trying to communicate this. I remember I told Steve that I do not understand English, but he said “Yes, you do understand English”. This conversation took place in the corridor and lasted about thirty minutes. I did not understand all of it. Eventually Steve spoke to someone on the phone and when he came back he told me I did not have to go to E Wing.

135. Even though the doctors at the hospital gave me tablets, when I got to Brook House these were confiscated and not administered to me. I was told I was not allowed to take them. This must have been the anti-inflammatory medication referred to in my records. I do not know why this was done, but I can say that some of the doctors at Healthcare did not appear to care about our welfare. There is one doctor in particular who seemed to intentionally provoke detainees and then call on officers for his own amusement. I’m not sure whether the decision that I would not receive my medication was Healthcare’s decision or the officers’ decision.

Complaints and oversight

136. While I was in detention, I made a number of complaints about my treatment and the services which included:

- a. My complaint on 14 January 2017 to the IMB (mentioned above) about the racist treatment I experienced in healthcare [IMB000164];
- b. My 8 February 2017 complaint to the IRC (mentioned above) after I was attacked by another detainee, placed in segregation under rule 40 and thereafter not permitted to work [HOM005326];
- c. My 22 February 2017 request to IMB (mentioned above) about the same incident with my cell mate [IMB000125]. As stated above, I did not think the officers’ reaction was fair. I should have received support and instead I was penalised.

- d. On 9 May 2019 Duncan Lewis made a complaint to the Home Office on my behalf about the force used against me on 11 March 2019 [DPG000036]. I say more about this below.
- e. On 9 May 2019 my solicitors, Duncan Lewis, wrote to the Director of Brook House to complain about the way my solicitor had been treated during a Legal Visit, the poor healthcare I was receiving and bullying and intimidation of me by staff [DPG000036].
- f. On 2 June 2019 I complained to the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) because on 1 June 2019 I was taken to the hospital three hours late for an appointment about my shoulder injury. This meant that I was not seen by the doctors.
- g. On 4 June 2019 I made a complaint about the same matter to G4S (ref: BHHC/35/19) and received a response on 21 June 2019 saying that the hospital machine had overheated which was why I could not have my appointment that day. As a result they did not uphold my complaint.
- h. In the meantime, I had on 5 June 2019 made a further complaint to G4S about the same matter (reference number 131000218858). On 4 July 2019 G4S replied again saying that they were unable to uphold my complaint because I had been taken to the hospital in time but had not been seen because of the machine over heating.
- i. On 21 July 2019 I made a complaint (reference 131000224157) about a custody officer who bullied me and acted unprofessionally. The officer gave me a smaller portion of food than other detainees and spoke to other detainees about my frustrations with my injury and healthcare. I received an outcome on 16 August 2019 from G4S which did not uphold my complaint saying that although the officer agreed that I had a smaller portion size this was not deliberate and that he did not recall discussing my personal issues with other detainees.

- j. On 25 July 2019 I complained about the dental treatment I received in the Centre. I had a lot of problems with my teeth and cavities which was spreading pain to my ears. On 12 August 2019 I received a response which did not uphold my complaint.

137. I probably made more complaints, but it was so long ago and I can't remember clearly. I made complaints by putting them in the complaints boxes. I had to ask other detainees to write my complaints for me as I cannot write in English and there was no other way for my complaint to be translated.

138. On 9 May 2019 my solicitors, Duncan Lewis, made a complaint about the force used against me on 11 March 2019 [DPG000036]. That complaint was referred to the Professional Standards Unit (PSU). They interviewed me on 5 June 2019. On 1 August 2019 I received a response from the PSU which confirmed that the matter had been reported to the Metropolitan Police. The PSU said that they had not found enough evidence to conclude that the officers behaved in an unprofessional manner. On 26 July 2019 I received a letter from the Sussex Police which said that they could not investigate further due to a lack of evidence and so they were closing the investigation into common assault and battery. I do not know what the police and PSU meant by a lack of evidence. I think more should have been done to hold the officers to account.

Conclusion

139. I found the two periods I was detained at Brook House awful. I was treated by officers and healthcare staff as though I was not human and without any respect.

140. It is hard to remember all the instances of intolerance, unfairness, and violence. Problems seemed to manifest in new ways every day so that suffering by detainees – in whatever form it took – was the norm. The process of writing this statement has brought to the surface many incidents I did not previously remember.

141. My experience of detention continues to haunt me. I still experience many problems as a result of my treatment in detention. My body reminds me of Brook House through its

constant pains. My hand still makes crackling noises when I use it because of the use of force against me on 31 August 2019, and sometimes it still hurts. My left shoulder injured by officers on 11 March 2019 still flares up frequently. I still take medications (Diclac and Nimesil) for pain in my hand and shoulder, as I could not cope otherwise.

142.I also have mental health problems as a result of my detention at Brook House. In the past I feared for my mother's safety when she was being threatened by my traffickers. I also feared for my own safety, especially after being followed and stabbed by the organisation that trafficked me. These experiences gave me severe anxiety, but everything became much worse at Brook House. After force was used against me in March 2019 I began to have thoughts of self-harm and suicide. I had never had such thoughts before.

143.I am still dealing with the impact of my health deteriorating the way it did. I still get headaches and anxiety to an extent that I did not experience before I was detained. The headaches become worse when somethings triggers memories of my detention – for example, when a G4S vehicle drives by, or when I had meetings with my solicitors to make this statement. I also suffer from depression which I did not have before I detained at Brook House.

144.I take medication to help me sleep and to cope with my anxiety and depression. I did not need this medication before my detention in Brook House. For sleep I take Phenergan and for my depression I take Sertraline.

145.I began having problems with my stomach while I was held at Brook House, which Healthcare had to give me strong painkillers for. I also developed problems in my ear and my heart. Sometimes I still feel like there is a needle going into my heart. For this, I now take a drug called Corvalmen which I get from the Ukraine.

146. I think detainees at Brook House were treated like dirt. I will probably never forget my awful time in that place. It's been 2 and a half years since I was released but I am still in the shadow of Brook House. I re-live my traumatic experiences in Brook House every day.

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 willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry's web site.

Signed:

Signature

Dated:

02/03/2022

Statement of truth:

I, **Name Irrelevant** Interpreter, speak both Ukrainian and English fluently. I have translated the above statement to **D1876** and confirm that he has appeared to understand it and has confirmed to me that the facts stated in this statement are true.

Signed:

Signature

Name Irrelevant

Dated:

3.03.2022