

Confidential

Independent Investigation into Brook House

Thursday, 1 February 2018

Interview with

**Mark Demian
Head of Safeguarding**

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

1. **Mr Marsden:** This is an interview with Mark Demian. It's part of the independent investigation of Brook House and it is 1 February 2018. *[Introductions]*
2. **Ms Lampard:** Mark, thank you for attending. As you know, we're undertaking an independent investigation commissioned by G4S with the approval of the Home Office, but it is independent of both those bodies. The interview is going to be informal. We're recording everything and the reason for that is you need to have a record of what you have said to us and we need to have a record of what you've said to us. It will be transcribed and you will get a copy of the transcript. This is not about catching you out; it's about getting the best evidence so if when you read the transcript you look at it and think, "No, that wasn't what I meant to say," or it didn't come out quite the way you meant to say it, then please feel free to amend it and when you have done please sign it and return it to us.
3. We're not sharing the transcripts with G4S, they're private to us and they will remain private to us. However, we may want to quote from the transcript in the report and we will be referring to people mostly by their job title and that obviously means in your case you would be identifiable. Please make it clear if, when quoting you, you don't want to be identified and we will anonymise things if that is what you feel you would like. And we will be careful about that. There may be times when you actually don't even want what you are saying to be recorded. If you feel that you want to say something completely off-line, then please feel free to do so and we will turn off the tape. A number of your colleagues have taken advantage of that. We will respect confidences although we can't guarantee that in the case of when somebody tells us something that suggests that an offence has been committed or somebody is at risk of harm.
4. If we're going to criticise anybody, and I'm not saying that we are, we will write to them in advance of the report being finalised to set out what the criticisms might be and to give them an opportunity to challenge those criticisms. And, finally, we ask that you don't share what we've talked about with other people because obviously we want people to give us their evidence fresh and unadulterated. Mark, can you just begin by giving us your current title and what your current roles and responsibilities are?

5. A. I'm the Head of Safeguarding. I've been here approximately eight weeks now. My main responsibilities are overriding responsibility for safer community and detainee reception. I also undertake as and when the duty director role.
6. Q. What is your previous experience and qualifications?
7. A. Prior to taking this role I was a police officer with the Metropolitan Police for 14 years where I had varied experience. The majority of my career was spent on uniformed response so responding to 999 calls. Later in my career I spent some time on a Crime Squad doing covert policing, surveillance and such like, and then in the last 18 months before leaving the Metropolitan Police I was in a managerial role undertaking a number of projects and responsible for crime prevention projects and the Special Constabulary at Bromley.
8. Q. And what was your rank?
9. A. I was a sergeant, temporarily promoted sergeant when I left.
10. Q. So as far as the Safer Community is concerned, we know that has obviously got a security bit of it in the sense of bullying and reduction of violence, but it also encompasses of course vulnerable detainees, safeguarding and that sort of thing. Do you have any qualifications in respect of safeguarding?
11. A. I don't have any qualifications, no. I have experience, again through policing, pretty much what was done on a daily basis is safeguarding related, it relates to adults and children at risk and I've undertaken training with the police, but I've not got any formal qualifications in those areas.
12. Q. And is there a plan for you to have any additional training for this role?
13. A. Yes. That has already been undertaken. We met with West Sussex Adult Safeguarding Board last week and we've reviewed our policies with them and they have put in place a number of training opportunities which I'll be undertaking as soon as possible.
14. Q. This is West Sussex, isn't it?
15. A. Yes.
16. Q. Who is your contact there?
17. A. Now you've put me on the spot!
18. Q. Don't worry, you can let us know.
19. A. I will let you know the name. Funnily enough she rang me this morning but I can't remember her. I'm afraid the last eight weeks have just been learning people's names!
20. Q. I bet. Absolutely. So you report directly into Lee, I presume?
21. A. Yes, Lee and Steve.
22. Q. Sorry, yes. Steve and then Lee. And who reports to you?
23. A. I have James Begg who is Violence Reduction Manager. Conway who is the Diversity Manager, Lucas Fullbrown who has just joined us. He's the Safer Custody Manager. And then I've got five DCMs who run the reception area so they're the Oscar 2 title.
24. Q. So just Luke. He's the Safer Custody –

25. A. Safer Custody Manager I think is his title. So he's taken on the role that James used to do.
26. Q. Right, so that's the safeguarding bit as opposed to the bullying and violence reduction, the Safer Communities bit?
27. A. He'll go and do the checks and sort the ACDT, the ABS documents, the SLP documents and things like that on a daily basis.
28. Q. That's really helpful. Does bullying and violence rest with James Begg?
29. A. Yes, it does.
30. Mr Marsden: Mark, what was it like when you arrived? Presumably immigration removal centres were as new to you as they were to us when we first came to the office. What has been your overall impression of the place?
31. A. I found it to be very positive. I don't think I had any expectations. Certainly when I was interviewed for the job and I was considering taking it and then of course the whole reason you guys are here happened in between me being interviewed and coming to join, and so I expected there to be challenges. I expected it to be hard work but, overall, it's a very positive centre in the main. There are a lot of people that work very hard and want to improve what is wrong. It's not perfect by any stretch of the imagination but –
32. Ms Lampard: First impressions? What do you think the big issues are for the management?
33. A. I think I'm probably slightly biased coming from a policing background where we had tools to enforce poor behaviour; we don't have that here. I think that's a huge challenge. There are no meaningful enhancements that can be given or taken, depending on behaviour; the staff are very limited in the tools they have to deal with poor behaviour. Essentially it's a written warning. We can't reduce somebody's enhancements so I think detainees probably learn quite quickly that although there are rules in place they're pretty much unenforceable and that makes us –
34. Mr Marsden: Due to the regime?
35. A. Yes, exactly. And, as I say, coming from a background where we have plenty of tools be it punitive, physical tools so, again the officers in order to protect themselves don't have personal protective equipment; they don't carry handcuffs, they don't carry batons, for example. Yes, it was a shock to me that we don't have anything in place, and I think that's a huge struggle and that's something that's got to be overcome but that's at Home Office level rather than at our levels.
36. Ms Lampard: And your view of relationships between staff and detainees?
37. A. My exposure to that is probably quite limited, partly because of the amount of time I've been here but partly because of my role. I'm not on the shop floor very often, if you like for want of a better phrase, but the interactions I've witnessed have actually been very positive. There's an awful lot of very caring staff who, despite those difficulties, spend an awful lot of time de-escalating detainees when there are issues and trying to go out of their way to do things for them. I think the staff/detainee relationship is actually very positive.
38. Q. James Begg suggested that he and the safeguarding function had struggled when Michelle went into Security and I think really what he was saying was

- that so far as his workload was concerned he was getting the ACDTs done, getting the reviews done, but there was really very little investigation work in respect of bullying and violence, that there was no trend analysis on either bullying and violence or ACDTs and it was all really very reactive stuff to do with very high profile issues, and so there has been no mitigation action planning. How are you going to address that?
39. A. It would say that James' comments are very fair; I think his workload was massive. 'Neglect' is probably the wrong phrase but I think that role was left empty for a long time. Obviously when Michelle left somebody took it for a very short period of time, decided it wasn't for them. I then started the process which appointed me eventually the vetting and everything else. That has been quite some time. I think really it's freeing James from the administrative tasks that he's taken on the meetings and such like that I often take off his back and give him the opportunity to actually do the work that he wants to do and that needs doing. I think already we're starting to see some results of that, certainly with regards to the analysis of figures and things that we spoke about and we are already starting to do that.
40. We've introduced a new Adults at Risk meeting that we have on a weekly basis and we now examine every one of those in turn. We've made better links with Social Services, which again is important for us to be referring adults at risk, so I think already in the short period we've started to see those changes. I think as much as anything else it's having a seat at the table; it's having a voice amongst the senior management and making them aware of the priority of the safeguarding functions.
41. Q. Can I just unpick the safeguarding a little bit? There are issues, aren't there, about the fact that I'm not sure that people are getting their refresher training in safeguarding. Is that correct?
42. A. I was funnily enough looking at this today. I think probably that hasn't happened on every occasion as it should. Again I'm going to look at changing that and rather than trying to half-heartedly deliver it ourselves, West Sussex have offered to come in and deliver to all the staff, deliver to every member of staff, a half-day input on safeguarding that is bespoke to the area so rather than a PowerPoint that we put together, something that actually fits the needs of the centre and will cover more how **we** should be liaising with them and the other external functions that are available. So, yes, it's a fair point. I think it probably has been overlooked in the past but it's something that's definitely on the radar.
43. Q. And another thing that I think is an issue probably, and I haven't quite got to the bottom of this, but staff view safeguarding, it is suggested, very much in terms of adults at risk within the centres so they see it's about suicide, self-harm, people with mental health issues. They don't see it as a wider issue in terms of the backgrounds of the people you might have here so issues about trafficking, about modern slavery, that's just something that happens out there. And the other issue is, of course, safeguarding children where so far as they're concerned that's about making sure that children don't get abused in the centre. The fact is that people might have children out in the community in shambolic relationships. We all know how it happens. You get picked up somewhere and you're the carer for a child out in the community who then goes and lives with an abusive uncle or aunt or something. But that again is something that is out there. Is that fair do you think?

44. A. I think that's more than fair. There's a training need there, certainly, from an initial training point of view where we're recruiting people often straight out of school that haven't had exposure to that sort of thing. It's something I'm very aware of because of the background that I come from but I think it is lacking and I think it's going to need adding to the initial training and we're going to have to look at retraining all of our current staff as well so that they have an understanding of some of those issues that go on outside of the centre and prior to people coming into our detention definitely.
45. Mr Marsden: And recognise the risk, too? And the risks to the centre and to G4S individuals?
46. A. Absolutely, yes. I think people don't think beyond that point. Like you said, they think of the immediate risk in terms of you have this person in our detention, are they going to self-harm, are they going to commit suicide? But they don't look at the bigger picture, I agree.
47. Q. Have you had any examples of that since you've been in post?
48. A. Not since I've been here.
49. Q. So you haven't seen things since arriving where you've thought we ought to have done something about that?
50. A. I mean slightly different. You've probably heard this example already where we've had people released from the centre, they're of no fixed abode and this is what led to our Adults at Risk review meeting where we were overlooking the Level 1 adults at risk and often they would be Level 1s because they're of no fixed abode. Of course we don't consider that risk while they're in the centre, but as soon as they're given bail that becomes a live issue and so that's certainly something we need to do some work around. There have been issues since I've been here where people have been released and then all of a sudden it's panic stations because what do we do with this person and we have nothing in place. We do need to look at that bigger picture
51. Ms Lampard: And you have somebody I think who Lee just said "We're simply releasing them because we've got nowhere safe to send them."
52. A. Yes, exactly.
53. Mr Marsden: And that was at a weekend, wasn't it? And it was under pressure from the Home Office?
54. A. Yes. They wanted us to physically remove him from the centre, but thankfully we have a management with broad shoulders who said no because that was absolutely the right thing to do. Yes, we need to look at that.
55. Ms Lampard: Mark, the other thing about the safeguarding training I suppose is to suggest to you that it's not just the staff on the wings for whom this is vital, it's pretty much everybody that any detainee ever comes into contact with.
56. A. Absolutely.
57. Q. From the moment –
58. A. Absolutely. The half day input that we have been offered from West Sussex, we've initially agreed to I think it was three or four sessions over a two-month period where they will come in and train all the senior management or the healthcare or the IMBs so everyone else that works here and then we'll try to add it to the initial training and we'll try and back-train everybody that's already here so that's all of the wing staff.

59. Q. Don't forget people like Forward and Hibiscus.
60. A. Absolutely.
61. Q. And anybody else who comes into the centre. Thank you, that's very helpful. Inductions. Can you tell me about inductions? How well are they being done?
62. A. I can't honestly give you very much information on inductions, and the reason for that is that I was due to take that on as one of my responsibilities but it's now gone to the residential manager to take care of. So the B Wing DCM, detainee custody manager, will take on that responsibility. I know that Stewart Povey was looking at doing some work around that and was re-designing the induction process –
63. Q. But it's gone to Juls?
64. A. It's gone to Juls. Certainly before I came there was anecdotal evidence that there were failings in that. It was something that was on my radar and, as I say, we've done it which makes more sense.
65. Q. I just also want to test with you your join up between Safer Community, safeguarding and vulnerable adults, security issues, induction. Where does all of that come together? I can see, under you, you might have the bullying. You might have a gang or something and people who are being bullied on the wing so that goes into James Begg. But then equally the chances are that the person in question who is being bullied has other issues as well, vulnerability issues, addiction issues, ACDT. How do you make sure that that gets lined up with also with Michelle's need to make sure that the person who is doing the bullying is not the main distributor of drugs on the wing; you can see exactly how that might happen.
66. A. Of course, yes.
67. Q. Bullying, drug dependence.
68. A. Absolutely.
69. Q. So just talk us through how we might make sure that nothing fell through the cracks.
70. A. I think possibly there has been the opportunity for it to fall through the cracks; I think the AAR meeting that we do on a weekly basis starting last week –
71. Q. Adults at Risk?
72. A. Yes. I think it will help with that because again it's a multidisciplinary meeting so we invite everyone; we invite Security, we invite Healthcare and obviously we go ourselves. We'll talk through the issues with those people and get an input from all different areas so if they're known to Security or if they're known to Healthcare for medical issues, and obviously we'll be aware of what's on an ACDT, what's gone on on the wings. I think the Detainee of Interest meeting helps with that as well, again because it tends to be the same people and we tend to then talk about people at the other end of the scale, the people that might be doing the bullying. We have quite an open discussion in those meetings so we'll obviously talk about people who are being bullied as well. It's very difficult to make sure that nobody is missed.

73. Q. I'm relieved to hear you say that because I have encountered a detainee who claims that they are being severely bullied, and they are able to show the scars which he claims come from being beaten up here, he says the person who was doing it was still on the wing. When pressed it was clear there was drug issues involved and my anxiety was that the individual doing the work would have been subject to Detainee of Interest probably but doing the bullying, but I couldn't see how the victim's story was being focused on as well.
74. A. Again it's difficult because often they won't tell us, whereas they might have told you. If we're aware of it then we'll put a plan in place, with regard to bullying and, as I say, the bullying will be added to the Detainee of Interest but it is difficult if people don't tell us and if staff aren't noticing that sort of thing happening on the wings.
75. Q. Or taking it seriously when they hear it?
76. A. I would like to think they are. I haven't seen evidence that they're not.
77. Q. We've seen the early returns of the Detainee Survey that I think Jerry Petherick introduced and I think that's the first time that's been done. Interestingly what the only thing that people consistently have said that happens is intimidation, threatening behaviour, by detainee on detainee. And I don't think I saw one which suggested that members of staff had actually threatened or bullied them.
78. **Mr Marsden:** No, no.
79. A. I'll be honest I haven't seen any of that survey.
80. **Ms Lampard:** So I suppose what I'm asking is –
81. **Mr Marsden:** We saw the raw data.
82. **Ms Lampard:** Will your Adults at Risk in a sense do proactive stuff to identify issues?
83. A. Yes, I would like it to. In its current format it's probably not geared to that. I think it was something that had been missed; we should have discussed adults at risk in this level of detail. We're doing that now. I would like it to be proactive. I'll be honest that that's going to be difficult with the staffing and everything else.
84. **Mr Marsden:** One thing we saw in NHS organisations when we were doing the Savile work was that taking safeguarding out of the organisation was always difficult; they would often rely on a relatively small team to spread the word or to provide advice. But in some organisations what they've done is they've created somebody, and in this case it would be in the detail on a wing, with particular interest and a particular responsibility for safeguarding. Not doing it all but –
85. A. Pushing that agenda, if you like? Have you been to one of our Safe Community meetings yet because I know we changed the dates.
86. Q. No, I don't think we have.
87. **Ms Lampard:** No, I don't think we have.
88. A. The only thing we do at the end of those is we have our orderlies so we have paid detainees that help with some of the Safer Community issues and

helping new detainees find their way around and things like that. We invite them to the last half hour of the meeting and we sit down with them as an open panel and we ask them to be honest and talk to us about any issues on the wings; whether there is intimidation, whether there is bullying and whether they see any evidence of that sort of thing. And they're normally quite open and honest. That's probably the nearest thing we have to that.

89. **Mr Marsden:** Do you get a good response from that?
90. **A.** We do get a good feedback and they are honest. Sometimes they tell us things you wouldn't like to hear but we need to hear it.
91. **Q.** And do those things then result in –
92. **A.** Yes, and then we take action based on that.
93. **Ms Lampard:** How does the Adults at Risk meeting in a sense differ from the Safer Community? What has Safer Community been doing in the past that wasn't –
94. **A.** The Safer Community meeting is more based around issues within the centre, physical issues, so for example the lack of the Samaritan provision. It's things like that that prevent us from providing the service that we should provide and we talk about that as a group and we put in place actions, too. We need to get those things in the future.
95. **Q.** So it's more operational as opposed to person-focussed?
96. **A.** Yes, exactly. So the Adults at Risk is very person-focussed and we get a list from the Home Office of everybody that is an adult at risk and we go through each of those individually with what's currently in place, what needs to be in place and what concerns we have when they're released, whether they're in the country or out of the country.
97. **Q.** I can see that that was missing. Okay, thank you. Just a couple of questions then. Detainees room-sharing risk assessments. I've got a slightly nerdy question about that which is the Home Office guidance suggests that in relation to violence the only thing that's really significant is violence within a confined space. That's how it's drafted.
98. **A.** I would think so, yes.
99. **Q.** It is, isn't it? And I just wonder –
100. **Mr Marsden:** And pretty extreme violence at that.
101. **Ms Lampard:** And pretty extreme violence at that. What is behind that? That's about wanting to maximise space, isn't it?
102. **A.** I may be speaking out of turn but I think that **DSO** is badly written; I think it opens both us and the Home Office up to a great deal of risk and yet it probably is around space.
103. **Q.** I'm just wanting some reassurance that people here understand that actually anyone who has committed violence anywhere is probably a danger to somebody else in a big room, in a park, on the underground. Do you think?
104. **A.** Yes. The reception staff start doing a thorough risk assessment and they go well beyond what the DSO asks for and they make a decision along with the induction staff as to where they're housed from then on. We certainly don't just look at violence within a confined space. But are there people sharing that are known to the police for violence? Yes, of course there are. And we

wouldn't be allowed by the Home Office to single room everybody that's known for violence.

105. Q. If it's any consolation to you I've spent some time this morning in the reception and I get the impression they're pretty wise to it. The issue they raise though, which you may have a view on, is that they sometimes don't get enough information from the Home Office.
106. A. They don't.
107. Q. And the fact that they don't have access to NOMIS is a real problem for them.
108. A. I completely agree. There have been incidences since I've been here where, we all share risk assessments based on the information in front of them, and within a day or two Security end up with further intelligence that does come from NOMIS and from the prisons and we then have to move them very quickly because we wouldn't have made that decision had we had all the information. I agree that they should have that information at reception and they should have more time and more staff because the thoroughfare of detainees through reception currently is far too high on a daily basis. There have been days when we've had 80 people going in and out of there with three staff. You can't possibly say that they're making as thorough a risk assessment as they would like and I would like with that level of staffing and that level of work. So, yes, that's a concern for me.
109. Q. How do you quality assure those reception and induction processes?
110. A. Funnily enough we've put something in place this morning because, again, I think it's something that's missing. Have you seen the daily matrix thing that they do in most departments? They have a checklist of things that they need to do so we've added to that a five per cent check of all detainee paperwork that comes in with them so the level of risk assessment, the level of information on the PER forms. We've done five per cent of those going out as well so the departure documents. So the manager, the Oscar 2 on reception, will on a night duty sample five per cent of the day's paperwork, go through them, fill out a form and that will come back to me to be quality assured.
111. Q. I haven't seen those matrixes actually but they'll be on the wings, will they?
112. A. Yes, if we have one that is specific to the wing and to the role that the manager has. But funnily enough we changed those this morning on reception and put in place the new process.
113. Q. I thought I had a bit of a bee in my bonnet about first night interviews because the local instructions on the local policy on first night interviews says if you haven't had the opportunity to have one before you go on the wing it'll have to happen when the next shift comes in. I think what's happening, but you may correct me, is in fact that reception are doing the first night interviews?
114. A. I think where possible they are, yes, or where it's unlikely that it's going to happen on B Wing. So either they're done on reception or they're done on B Wing. So certainly before they go into the general population. At least that's the idea.
115. Q. But it isn't necessarily happening that first night?
116. A. I don't know is the honest answer.

117. Q. Okay. Handovers. We have people arriving here at 7.45, they go onto the visits hall and they get a briefing on the day, detainees of interest and all that sort of thing and they get back to their unit, their wing, probably about three minutes to eight where they then meet the night staff who are desperate to go! Is there an issue about how good those handovers and certainly in relation to those on ACDT?
118. A. I haven't witnessed them myself, if I'm honest, but like you say it's a very small window and on certain wings you can have several people on an ACDT. Could that handover be as thorough as it should be in the amount of time they have? Probably not. I would suggest it probably needs longer but, as I say, I haven't witnessed it personally.
119. Q. I suppose I think we've described it having witnessed it because I think Ed used the word 'perfunctory', so it may be something that you're going to have to have a look at.
120. A. Yes.
121. Q. And age dispute cases. How frequent are they? How often is that an issue?
122. A. Again, it's not something that's been an issue since I've been here. Unfortunately I've only got the last eight weeks to go on and I'm taking very little operational away from James at the moment, but it's not something that I've come across in eight weeks. I really haven't been made aware of it as an issue so I would suggest not as often as you would think.
123. Q. So far as we understand it people answer quite well the question, "What would you do if....?". They'd tell their manager and it would be sometimes to talk to with the Home Office. I'm not quite sure I understand the process but the Home Office either has evidence - as I understand it from the DSO guidance - on which it will say either yes or no, but if it doesn't have that firm evidence, it then moves into the possible and it's only in the 'possible' state that the Merton Compliant Test is asked for.
124. A. That's how I understand it, yes.
125. Q. I suppose the issue for me is that if you had an anxiety that, notwithstanding all of their view that they've got the evidence, you are still dealing with somebody who might be underage, do you have the power to, as it were, stamp your foot and say, "No, I still need a test," or "I want this resolved." How would you deal with that?
126. A. Certainly personally that would be my view and I would certainly push for the test. I think because we're making better inroads with the local Social Services we could have that ability to directly refer to them, and certainly if we as G4S didn't have the say so with regards to having to force them to do the test I think Social Services would be able to. Certainly that's one of the discussions we had last week and they're quite happy for us to directly refer to them and we should be directly referring to them in instances such as that. So, yes. Again I think that comes down to a training need and that's something that we'll look at as and when we re-train everybody because it's whether the wing staff would know how to do that.
127. Q. The operations investigation that took place after *Panorama* recommended a policy for age-appropriate accommodation for detainees living with the general population of detainees about whom there may be concerns that they're just not mature enough, so I think taking the *Panorama* programme there was the individual who ended up being deemed to be but equally there

- were still concerns here about him being an adult. Have you got anywhere with that policy about the age-appropriate accommodation?
128. A. It's not something that I've been asked to look at. I would hope that it's been looked at prior to my arrival. I think if I was looking at it there's certainly a difficulty with regards to the building itself as to where you would house people in that situation. I think possibly the only suitable location would be B Wing, the induction wing, long-term. Yes, it's not something that's been made aware to me and it's not something that I was aware of but I would hope that it has been looked at prior to my arrival.
129. Q. If you could look into it and let us know whether something has been done about that policy that would really helpful.
130. A. Yes, of course. Absolutely.
131. Q. And finally there are two other issues that I wanted to cover. The suicide and self-harm policies talk about staff who work in areas of high self-harm and serious incidents and they're meant to have some sort of annual consultation to identify their support needs. Have you any sense that that's ever happened really?
132. A. Honestly, no. The rotation of staff is so great at the moment because we're quite short-staffed and I think you don't have the same staff working on either wing every day so I would suggest that probably doesn't happen.
133. Q. And, again, something I think we've picked up that's never been happening really is about de-briefing on incidents both hot and cold and support for staff, really, to reflect on what's happened and how they might handle things better. You may tell me we're wrong in assuming that but it doesn't seem as though it's happening really.
134. A. I haven't seen that happen. Certainly we do it wherever we use force but I haven't seen it just where there's no force used; it's just like for say a self-harm incident, for example, or something that might be distressing to staff.
135. Q. And, equally, examples like *Panorama* or like the incident in November where there was mass insurrection here, we're getting the sense that there hasn't been any opportunities for the staff to really reflect on what's happened, to be de-briefed and to talk about 'what we learnt and what we'll do differently next time.'
136. A. Obviously both of those incidents were prior to my arrival here but it's certainly not something I've seen since I've been here.
137. Mr Marsden: You were interviewed before *Panorama*?
138. A. Yes.
139. Q. But obviously joined long after. When you saw the programme, as I'm sure you did, what did you make of it? And what do you make of it having now been here for eight weeks?
140. A. I was offered the job and funnily enough came in for my vetting interview the day before *Panorama* was going to be shown so I was aware of it.
141. Q. So people here told you about it?
142. A. Yes, Ben had told me about it that day. It's a difficult one. There are some absolutely horrendous scenes in the *Panorama* programme; there are some things that definitely should never have happened and I would like to think those people are going to be dealt with appropriately and I know that's still

ongoing. Unfortunately you can never ensure that you have it so that 100% of the staff wouldn't do something like that. But you can try and minimise it. I think the programme honed in on those couple of incidences and, along with this and I think 'glamorised' is the wrong word, but it was certainly sensationalised. Yes, that's the word I want.

143. **Ms Lampard:** I think the technical term is 'sexed up'!

144. **A.** Yes! 'Sexed up' – that's probably fair. I think it probably was because obviously it makes good television. As I say, having been in the police for 14 years I'm not a stranger to that sort of sensationalism. I think I have watched the programme again since being here, just out of curiosity, to see if or how I would feel any differently. As I said, I see some absolutely excellent work that goes on by the majority of the staff on the wings on a daily basis and I think that weighing that against those couple of incidences, yes, they're horrendous but actually the Centre, as a whole, works relatively well. There's work to do but I think it works relatively well and I think the programme painted it in a very poor light which I don't think was particularly fair.

145. **Q.** Can I ask you about something slightly different? The evidence on this is difficult to pin down but this is a possible scenario within this Centre which is that staff have been very stretched, that the front-line managers have been very few and far between and where they have been on they have not had the training really to be a manager. Staff therefore don't really get the support or the modelling of behaviours that they ought to be getting, there's inconsistency because people aren't properly trained and that means that staff really rely on themselves and their own loyalties, and that develops a little bit of laddish culture. You can see how this works and how there might be room for things to go a bit wrong. Is any of that something that you've felt while you've been in here, that there might be a slightly under-managed staff and consequent behaviours as a result?

146. **A.** I think there are definitely inconsistencies with training and inconsistencies in the way that things are done from an operational management point of view. I think that's more than fair and that does come down to a lack of mentoring because new managers are thrown straight in and there's scope for that to be better managed, for them to have some sort of mentoring and for them to have a set way of doing things in place and for everybody to follow that same thing. I wouldn't necessarily say that develops that 'laddish behaviour' that led to some of the incidents in *Panorama*; I would like to think that was individual on those people who were involved in that. But, to a degree, that sort of behaviour can only develop if those people aren't managed so they've had time to push the boundaries. They haven't started off by choking somebody, have they? They started off by pushing one rule and then another and then another and then got to the point where they feel comfortable to do that.

147. **Q.** In public?

148. **A.** Yes. We should never be in a position where that's possible.

149. **Mr Marsden:** Mark, when you started you said or commented about a lack of sanctions and the lack of a firm regime to ensure the good order in the place. The other thing that has struck me quite forcefully is the actual day-to-day regime at the moment doesn't look particularly structured or consistent as in the kinds of activities that would keep a population of mainly young men active and occupied and away from causing trouble. It feels a bit hit and

- miss. The courtyards aren't necessarily open and is there a regular activities programme that's been targeted for the kind of people who are resident?
150. A. Yes, I completely agree. I think we're always going to have difficulties because of the diverse population that we have. Obviously we have people that have come from prison, we've got people that have never been in detention and we've got a huge variation in age so to offer something that fits all of those groups is probably almost impossible. I agree that there's certainly more that could be done and I know James is currently looking at a local business centre and trying to see if there are opportunities for paid employment to see if they've got simple tasks that can be done; I think one of the suggestions was putting taps together for a plumbing firm. Things that we could do as paid employment so the detainees get paid and it actually gives them some structure to their day so they can have work like the rest of us do. So that's something that James is looking at. I think James has a lot of work to do in finding different things to take people away from that poor behaviour and that's something that he's been tasked with. But, yes, the activities provision isn't right in its current form and it is hit and miss, like you say, and that's fair.
151. Ms Lampard: There's another thing that's been floated past us as well as a possibility that people, staff, this business of not being managed, don't have anyone modelling it for you, is that staff perhaps don't know who their line manager is, they don't have confidence in their line manager, they don't report each other and things and misdoings by each other because, frankly, there doesn't seem to be any way to do it or nothing happens if you do. But there's also a sense I think that senior management's reaction in the past to poor behaviours has been extremely heavy-handed, hasn't been about discipline and investigation, it hasn't necessarily been about encouragement, development and investigations have hung over people's heads for a very long time and sometimes have been instigated over very minor things. Is that something that you've picked up?
152. A. The point about being done for minor things, that I haven't witnessed. I am aware, speaking to the other managers, that certainly that has been the case in term of the timeframe taken and there are things that have taken far too long. I think the processes are better now and are dealt with far quicker.
153. Q. Where was the blockage before? You don't know?
154. A. I don't know is the honest answer. I think it works better and certainly in the eight weeks that I've been here there have been incidences that have been dealt with almost from start to finish so I would say eight weeks probably isn't that unreasonable. I think it's getting better. From what people have said to me it was atrocious.
155. Q. And do you think it was sometimes that it was too disciplinary as well, in that sometimes you haven't got managers there nipping things in the bud and talking people through things, and what happens is it then becomes a big issue.
156. A. Yes. I think a lot of the things that end up certainly on Steve's desk as a disciplinary issue probably should be dealt with by the operational manager.
157. Mr Marsden: If you think back to your time in the Met, and the workforce isn't completely unlike a police force, is it, except the terms on which people are engaged but that's slightly different. How were things in your time there?

158. A. That's exactly what I was about to say. One of the biggest difficulties is the shift pattern that the guys set up because the manager's shift pattern is different from the staff shift pattern. I've got five DCMs who run reception and they each manage three or four members of staff. They won't necessarily work their shifts with that manager so they may not see them for several weeks at a time. Certainly within the police force, as a sergeant, I worked with my team. That was my team and I worked with them so I was there on a daily basis to deal with training needs and minor disciplinary issues that could be dealt with there and then, so it didn't need to escalate to the point where it comes upstairs. That's an issue and I think that's lacking.
159. Q. The thing that you would say, "Oi, don't do it that way," –
160. A. But that doesn't happen. Because potentially the member of staff doesn't know the manager that they're working for on that particular day and it's certainly not somebody that they report to. From the manager's point of view they don't take ownership of the problem and the member of staff thinks, "Well, that particular manager is a soft touch so I can cut corners". But if you had that continuity in management on a daily basis and you work the same shifts, I think you can put a lot of these problems in the past.
161. Q. Is it inevitable that people are reporting to people who they don't work with?
162. A. Yes, because of the way the shifts work. So, yes, the managers work a completely different pattern to the staff.
163. Ms Lampard: What is the managers' pattern then?
164. A. I think they do a 42-hour week whereas the staff do 46 or 47; the hours are slightly different so their days fall slightly differently.
165. Mr Marsden: That's quite a problem then actually, isn't it?
166. A. Yes.
167. Q. Because essentially what you end up with is complete disconnection from operational managers and the teams.
168. A. Some of them will work together sometimes and they'll do their yearly reviews ,but is it actually based on observing? Is it for a percentage of the time or all of the time?
169. Ms Lampard: But the answer to that is also that managers need to understand that they are generic managers and everybody's behaviour around them is their responsibility.
170. A. I completely agree. Yes.
171. Q. And that's not been happening, has it?
172. A. I don't think so.
173. Q. That lack of ownership. We've noticed the lack of ownership.
174. A. Yes. And that comes with not working the same staff, that comes with not having a sense of belonging to a particular part of the business perhaps? Staff are moved around so frequently because we're short-staffed so you'll have staff working on one Wing one day and one day the next. I don't think they take ownership of their role and their area and their surroundings and I think that will improve behaviour amongst the staff.

175. **Mr Marsden:** Do people in SMT, and I know or I think you are the nearest member, have you made it your business or do others make it their business to walk around the place?
176. **A.** Yes. Steve and Lee certainly make a bit point of asking the rest of us to do exactly that and they certainly do it on a daily basis. The first thing I normally do when I come in is go down to reception and see how the night has been, see how the staff are faced and what their workload is for the day. I've spent a couple of days so far just sitting with them and trying to work out what the issues are first hand. You can't get a better insight than that of sitting with your staff and seeing what they're doing on a daily basis. I can sit in my office and ask questions but I'm only going to get the answers by going down and working with them. Certainly I'm doing that and I think the rest of the team do as well. I think the Duty Director role forces us to do that as well; to explore other areas in the business because we go around every wing and every department on those days. We interact with staff and we ask what the issues are and so as long as the staff are honest with us and we actually look, I think yes.
177. **Q.** And would you have used that as an opportunity to say to somebody that you're still learning the ropes yourself? Or maybe not. But do you think there is a culture of managers saying to the staff, "This is how I want you to do it."
178. **A.** I'd like to think so. I do already and if I see something I'll ask the question, "Why are you doing it like that?" "Well, that's the way we've always done it." That's what my role is for and I'll ask, "Give me a reason why." I quite like to challenge people and I think the other managers do as well. I would say that they do or at least I hope that they do.
179. **Ms Lampard:** I don't have any further questions
180. **Mr Marsden:** Having been here for eight weeks, if you were going to make a couple of improvements, what would be the things that are at the forefront of your mind?
181. **A.** I think we've spoken about some of them. The enhancements and sanctions I think we need something, as a centre, but that's not just Brook House. It's got to be consistent across the estate otherwise we'll be moving detainees from one to another, and we can't have a different system here from there because people will want to go back there or want to come here. I think it's got to be fair across the estate but we need that –
182. **Q.** Although having something here would be better than nothing, wouldn't it?
183. **A.** Of course it would, yes.
184. **Q.** But it's actually trying to get consistency across the estate. It might be very difficult.
185. **A.** It would help us. It might make the others' life more difficult and that's why I say it should be consistent. I think there's some work to do around training because after the initial eight weeks training that they get as the ITC which I think you've seen a lot of, the refresher training that should be done is missing. It shouldn't just be refresher training, we should be adding to that. There are new things that people need to learn about as we discussed, the trafficking and the other outside issues, so there's work to be done around training. Again I think we discussed that there are opportunities to make detainees feel more useful and more valued and give them some purpose to their day rather than staring at four walls wondering whether they're going to

be sent home or not. I think that would solve a lot of our problems; we'd have less violence, less bullying, less hooch-making, less drug use. Everything.

186. Q. So more or less thinking that there's a purpose for getting up and on with things?

187. A. Exactly, yes.

188. Q. The fact that everyone is going off with something to do.

189. A. Yes, we use the word 'regime' but I wouldn't describe it as a regime. It could be a regime, better structured day, yes.

190. Ms Lampard: That's really has been helpful.

191. A. Good!

192. Q. Thank you very much. And the thing that you said you'd do for us is look into what happened to the age-appropriate accommodation?

193. A. Yes, I will look into it. Absolutely.

[Interview concluded]