

Confidential

Independent Investigation into Brook House

Wednesday, 13 June 2018

**Interview with
Ben Saunders
Former Director of Brook House**

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

1. **Mr Marsden:** This is an interview with Ben Saunders, the former Centre Director at Brook House. It is part of the independent investigation. It is 13 June 2018. *[Introductions]*
2. I shall just say for the record that I have explained to Ben the basis on which this interview is happening.
3. **Ms Lampard:** Ben, do you want to just begin by telling us something about your career and history, how you came to Brook House, and when?
4. **Mr Saunders:** Sure. I worked for ~~another a Local authority~~ Authority for ten years prior to G4S. I worked with children in children's homes both in community and in secure children's home.
5. I qualified as a social worker while I was working for DPA County Council and, like I say, I worked for them for about ten or 11 years.
6. I moved to G4S in 2002 to go and work at Medway Secure Training Centre – viewed by some as a move to the dark side from the local authority perspective into the private sector, but for me it was about the challenge and wanting to develop myself. Medway was a challenge. I went there as part of the new team. They had had some difficulties in their set up. There was some change required in terms of the culture there, and so a new team was brought in. I was there ten years, and for about five years, or just under five years as the Director, and we moved the centre from – frankly, it was uninspectable once. An inspector paused an inspection halfway through within a couple of months of us being there to say that they couldn't inspect and we were given some short timescales to improve it, which we did, and they came back. I think initially we moved it to outstanding, so we were delighted, that we had moved the culture of standards to the point where the inspector had recognised that.
7. One of the things I was very pleased about was that we were a very self-effacing Senior Management Team. We didn't take anything for granted. We questioned ourselves, we were very reflective and we trusted each other. We were a stable Senior Management Team that was there for a long time.
8. It was ten years at Medway. It felt like I had done that for a long time and was ready for a change. I didn't see any other route to progression within

the organisation in the Children's Services branch that I was working in, particularly, and an opportunity came up at Gatwick IRCs, which I went for.

9. I was successful. I am from **DPA** I had been living in **DPA** for ten years. I had separated from my wife and children. They had moved back to **DPA** so it was a really good opportunity for me to come back to where I came back from. I am very in touch with my children, but it meant that I could live five minutes from my son's school and it just improved the contact.
10. From a professional point of view I started out as a social worker, but I moved into the management field, and this enabled me to expand my experience. I had never worked with detainees or adults before in that kind of capacity. I had never worked in immigration. It is a very different customer to work with. You have the Home Office rather than the Youth Justice Board. There are some very similar issues around safeguarding, residential, management, care for the people who are vulnerable, but very different in terms of looking after adults, albeit ~~it~~ there were some families to consider.
11. **Mr Marsden:** Can I just ask, at that point were there obvious career opportunities in G4S for -?
12. **A.** No, not for me. Not that I thought were very forthcoming. Don't get me wrong, they didn't stunt me in some ways. They sponsored me to do an MBA, which was extremely helpful and which I really enjoyed, which enabled me to work at Medway when I was in paid work. It was a sideways move, but it was a much bigger establishment, two establishments – Brook House and Tinsley House.
13. With a bigger start instaff team, bigger revenue, different complexities with the customer. Having the customer on-site that shared management of the centres, which is a very different model to working in a secure training centre where you really have to monitor on site who is monitoring the contract.
14. **Q.** Compared to Medway did it feel like a big jump?
15. **A.** It felt like a step up – it was bigger, it was busier in terms of the complexity, the ins and outs of people coming through. Having two sites is an interesting dynamic because Brook House demands a lot of attention. It is important that Tinsley House gets attention because they can very easily feel marginalised, and there is history there. I don't know, I have just heard anecdotally, but there was history there that people told me that they felt marginalised when Brook House went live and became operational. I am sorry I have forgotten the question.
16. **Ms Lampard:** Did it feel like a step up?
17. **A.** Yes, it did. I think one of the main differences was the style of management that I experienced between Children's Services and Custodial and Detention Services. It was a real shift for me because I felt much more accountable as the Director of Gatwick than the STC. I was accountable, but I felt like there was a lot more pre-determined when I was the Manager of STC, that was directed to me, rather than me having much more autonomy and accountability for managing the Gatwick contract. I did feel very much that it was my contract to manage, my responsibility. I would be held accountable, that's the Director's role.

18. There are two Managing Directors involved in that, and Jerry is one of those from Detention, but I think a very different style of being a Managing Director between Jerry and my previous centre.
19. **Q.** Let's unpick that a bit more. I was going to come onto that later, but let's pick it up and make it now.
20. **A.** Okay.
21. **Q.** That business of accountability, how did that actually work in practice? What did it mean for you that you were accountable for that contract in the sense that I think what you are saying is that previously there was a regime you would adhere to, but this time, in a sense, there wasn't quite that sort of regime and you had to –
22. **A.** To an extent, yes. To an extent. How can I describe it? Within Children's Services there was almost like a template for how the STCs were to be run. Yes, in terms of regime the contract was pretty prescriptive, anyway, so the regime was really what the contract dictated, but it was more around – because we operated three STCs, it was a good part of the revenue for Care and Justice, but it was a smaller part. There was a single customer, and the inspectorate was the same.
23. Medway was a bit out on a limb, so you didn't get visited very often unless you were in trouble or there was some help needed. There was an element of you wouldn't go past Medway unless you were going to France, whereas the other two centres were in the Midlands, and that is where the core presence was, so whether you wanted more management presence on site or not, you had it.
24. **Mr Marsden:** In the Midlands?
25. **A.** In the Midlands, yes, which is similar to Gatwick. If you look at the geographical spread of the Custodial and Detention Services part of the business, you have Parc and you have Altcourse, but then you have a core of Midlands-based centres, and Gatwick is down here. We didn't have a huge amount of visits from people and we were, generally speaking, centres that didn't experience too many problems, which was welcomed. Our business as usual was pretty good. Our contract delivery was pretty good. We didn't throw up any major safeguarding issues because we had some good policies and practices in place.
26. **Ms Lampard:** Just tell me, then, about how it felt in terms of Jerry's management style, as opposed to the previous management style you had experienced in Children's Services.
27. **A.** Jerry was supportive. I would consider Jerry to be a supportive manager. He wasn't always easily accessible, but that is by virtue of needing to go into prisons and not having a phone, but he had a pager, and if there was something really urgent that you needed to get hold of him for, he didn't respond immediately always, but was very quick to say don't worry about giving him a prompt or giving him a ring, and so he was always approachable. He was very supportive, and we would have a good level of conversation about different things that were going on. He could also be very firm sometimes.
28. **Q.** Okay. Some people have suggested to us that sometimes he was quite explosive, and that some managers in G4S have felt bullied by him. Bully is a big word, isn't it, in the sense that it has a lot of implications.

29. A. Of course.
30. Q. We have heard about table-thumping, and some people feeling quite uncomfortable sometimes with Jerry's management style.
31. A. Yes.
32. Q. Is that something you recognise?
33. A. I have never experienced bullying from Jerry and I would be very specific about that. I wouldn't describe what I have experienced as anywhere near bullying. I have experienced a sharp tongue and some appropriate challenge.
34. **Mr Marsden:** That would be an appropriate challenge?
35. A. Yes, absolutely. He has made me feel quite uncomfortable sometimes, but that's typically been in the process of having conversations involving scrutiny and challenge, which in my view have been quite appropriate.
36. I have heard stories of table-thumping, and stuff like that, but I have not experienced those. I have experienced him being short and robust, and I have found some conversations difficult with him, but I wouldn't describe any of them as anything like bullying. That is not my experience.
37. **Ms Lampard:** He himself, I think, would say that he hadn't been available enough sometimes, quite stretched, that he didn't feel that he perhaps had enough of a finger on some institutions, and I think he describes how Birmingham then came up as an issue, and that really did distract him and his team. Is that something you recognise?
38. A. Yes, definitely. I think some of the history, the difficulties – Jerry has been campaigning for years for a Chief Operating Officer.
39. I don't know whether you have spoken to Jerry or not yet. He was campaigning for years for a COO and it kept being knocked back is my understanding. Bear in mind that I am on the periphery of these conversations and people have had much closer conversations. He will have seen that in Children's Services they had an Operations Director kind of role who managed the operation, enabling the MD to deal with the other customer-focused strategy, the commercial, and those kinds of things. I think Jerry struggled – I am pretty sure Jerry struggled with that on the basis that his business is a lot bigger, as complex, if not more complex than Children's Services. Therefore, for a long period of time Jerry was having to be the Managing Director, doing all the things that he needed to do. To get someone down to London to be in Head Office, and then when there's an issue like Medway, *Panorama*, for example, then if he were to be asked a series of questions about how he manages the governance and how he knows what's going on his establishments, his response is "I can't do everything all of the time."
40. Therefore, yes, I think he felt really stretched. He is a workaholic. I have never known somebody work so hard, long hours, a bit everywhere, and he puts on a really good face. He doesn't show his fatigue.
41. Sometimes, if you wanted to approach him about something you would pick your timing because I wanted to be respectful of the complexity of what else was going on for him.

42. Q. As we are on this thread of how management felt, let's deal with the issue of the question of autonomy and the need to perform and how that felt. No table-thumping, no bullying, but just describe for me how you felt you had to perform, what you needed to deliver. What were G4S looking for? We have heard about the trading review process –
43. A. Yes, 100 slides.
44. Q. Yes, exactly, where we understand there were 100 slides.
45. A. Yes.
46. Q. Just tell us about how that felt, how productive it really was with 100 slides, and how anybody gave any sense of prioritisation, what that prioritisation was?
47. Mr Marsden: What really matters.
48. Ms Lampard: Yes, what really matters. It is a long question, but it is all the same thing. You have this absolute raging bull of a process. What do you feel you really had to show out of it?
49. A. This is interesting because it cuts into some of my values, to be honest, and some of my thoughts in the last couple of years in working for G4S about how much I was enjoying it, about whether there was any conflict for me around what the priorities were, and I have not really vocalised those openly before, but, certainly, they were feelings that I had.
50. The focus was very much on contractual delivery. Have you spoken to people about the corporate renewal process after electronic monitoring and the Creating Conscious Leaders programme?
51. Q. No.
52. A. I might need you to remind me, but I will come back to what you just asked me. After the electronic monitoring issue –
53. Q. This is the tagging?
54. A. The tagging, yes. G4S appeared to be on the naughty step, so needed to get off it. They obviously took a number of measures to do that, one of which was investing in a programme for senior managers called Creating Conscious Leaders for the next terminal company that would come in. I think it was invested in in mixed ways within the structure of the organisation, we at Gatwick, and certainly Jerry was an advocate. There was some cynicism around the quality of it because it was a bit coaching, reflecting, and I am a natural reflector, partly because of my make-up, but partly because of my social work training is that you reflect, don't you, on the practice and think about how you can improve. Part of that is through 360-degree feedback. It plotted it on a model, and it was designed to help you understand what kind of leader you were and how you could be conscious about your leadership. That served me to reflect on what kind of leader I had become and it was quite hard-hitting in some ways, because I found that the feedback I received in my reflections of what we talked about, I had become a very target-focused, contractually-compliant-focused manager and leader, and, actually, that is not the person I am. I am very people-focused, and I found that refreshing and I reflected on that and incorporated some of that change into our discussions and conversations, and how I would behave in my work.

55. However, that wasn't universally the thread through the organisation. I am not talking in Custody and Detention Services because I think Jerry was very invested in it too, and he did use some of the theories and the facilitators to post team away days for directors, which was really good. However, more senior to that there didn't seem to be much investment, more senior to Jerry there didn't seem to be much investment in the Creating Conscious Leaders' principles, and I struggled with that, because I think the focus seemed to be on targets and profit. People will talk about people and we need the best people, the values, and how we manage that, and how we look after people, but, in reality, all of our targets were financed-focused.
56. **Mr Marsden:** What is Peter's focus?
57. **A.** I don't know. I don't know Peter hugely well. I know him to talk to and we have had several conversations. I have met him a few times, and we have been in different meetings together around bidding and new contracts, or retaining the contracts, and that kind of stuff. However, I don't know Peter. Peter is a survivor, though. Historically, through G4S there have been a number of changes in that Senior Executive Team, and Peter is the lone survivor of others that have come and gone.
58. **Ms Lampard:** Therefore, your evidence is quite clearly that the focus seemed to be on targets and profit. People talked about people, but in reality the focus was on profit?
59. **A.** Yes. I wouldn't say that necessarily of Jerry, but it felt like that above, and, certainly, there was pressure around delivery, absolutely.
60. **Q.** However, when we talked, in a sense, going back to the question about those meetings, at those meetings who else would be there at your trading reviews?
61. **A.** It would be Jerry's team, really. It would be the Commercial Director, Martyn Kenyon
62. **Q.** This is all Jerry's team in Custodial and Detention Services?
63. **A.** Yes. I think Martyn had a role for the region.
64. **Q.** Martyn?
65. **A.** Kenyon. Martyn is a really good guy. Jerry's business was such a proportion of the Care and Justice, and he knew the business inside-out –
66. **Q.** However, in a sense, so it wasn't the team above Jerry who were there, it was Jerry's team?
67. **A.** Yes.
68. **Q.** However, you felt through them, did you, this sort of pressure for delivery?
69. **A.** No, not just that. There was pressure for delivery from Jerry. It's right - you should deliver.
70. **Q.** However, this focus on profit as opposed to, perhaps, some of the wider stuff, the softer stuff, how did that come through?
71. **A.** That came through from more senior –
72. **Q.** How did that come through?

73. A. That would come through target setting, budget setting, budget challenge, tasking that would come up.
74. Q. Did Jerry's team ever say to you this is what they want from above? This is what we have to deliver?
75. A. Yes.
76. Q. That is how it would be expressed?
77. A. Yes.
78. Q. You sometimes felt that maybe they were a bit thinking, could we concentrate on a wider discussion, but they also had these pressures on them?
79. A. The trading review, there's a governance element to the meeting. When we go up, I presented my 100-slide deck, not in its entirety, but we did move to some more sensible arrangements around it, although reverted back to some points. However, the purpose was really governance on my management information and my figures, and they were wide-ranging. I don't know if you have seen the slide deck from me providing a summary of operational news, good and bad – some things for discussion, some things for decision. Therefore, it shouldn't really surprise us on there. I don't normally like to go into those meetings and illuminate on something that I haven't heard of before, because that tended to be a bit more difficult. You only have a two-slot window, it was quite pressured. They would line up and then Jerry and his team would line up.
80. Q. How long did the meetings last?
81. A. They were scheduled for two hours.
82. Q. How often did they take place?
83. A. Monthly, in Birmingham every time, and it was normally they scheduled all of the trading reviews into two consecutive days, so in some ways we got off lightly, but the people who held all the other trading reviews were in for a day of trading reviews, and that is pretty heavy.
84. **Mr Marsden:** Ben, can I just dig into this issue of the trading review profitability? There was a margin built into the contract? That's a question – was there?
85. A. Yes.
86. Q. Your month-by-month responsibility, as the Director, would be to make it profitable, more profitable?
87. A. These contracts, when you have them, yes, you have a set profit margin as part of it, but as a –
88. Q. With all being well, and you run the centre in the way that the bid anticipated –
89. A. Yes.
90. Q. You will deliver a margin?
91. A. Yes. There is an expectation that you deliver more.
92. Q. Yes. That is what I am getting at, I suppose.

93. A. Yes, there is an expectation, and that's normally based on what you paid the year before, so the budget setting will be you made this the year before, why can't you do it this time?
94. Q. That money is not for re-investment in Brook House?
95. A. No.
96. Q. That money is for –
97. A. I don't know where –
98. Q. It goes to –?
99. A. To more substantial parts somewhere.
100. Q. It goes to the shareholders?
101. **Ms Lampard:** When you say it was based on the year before, as in, you made that amount of money last year, why can't you do the same for this year, was there also an expectation that, actually, this year you might do better than last year?
102. A. Yes, there was some target, but that is wrapped up in all sorts of other ways. It is not just about making the profit. I don't know if I am able to talk about 60 beds, but it could be about new business, or organic growth. It could be through other initiatives. There was an expectation that I would have discussions with the customer about how we might extend the contract, or how we might develop different services.
103. Q. Therefore, it wasn't based just on the bald money?
104. A. No.
105. Q. It was based on business accrual, as it were?
106. A. Yes.
107. Q. However, equally, we all know what that really means at the end of the day, don't we, which is that it is more profitable.
108. A. Yes, there is a focus on profit. There is a focus on profit and there is a focus on cash. The kind of large business that it is, monthly reporting, and you get near the six-month figures coming out and there is pressure.
109. **Mr Marsden:** Just give me a flavour for what would deliver in a good trading review for your accounts, and what would have delivered an uncomfortable trading review?
110. A. I will say that I know I have talked about money quite a lot, but we were in a good financial situation. I am sure you know how the contract was operated financially in terms of the fixed fee, so there were no variable earners to that. We made our savings from looking at how we could save on budgets that we had set against the year, about any kind of savings opportunities we could do, being more economical with cleaning products or –
111. Q. It is squeezing and using some logic?
112. A. Yes, exactly, and it is quite small figures. Staffing vacancies generated some profits because you were saving on costs that you had already looked at. Therefore, we were typically in a good position financially because we didn't incur massive, great penalties, generally. The big penalties were coming from things like escapes in terms of large figures, but from a penalty point of view

we were very transparent about how we reported any performance failures. Through the course of me being there, we developed a much more robust contract assurance model, where previously, I have to be honest, the Home Office were sloppy, frankly. They didn't scrutinise the contract at all, and, certainly, that's the impression I got from the previous director as well. There was a Cabinet Office audit done a few years ago following the electronic monitoring of all large contracts and the Home Office were slammed by the audit report because of their lack of contract monitoring, partly.

113. Q. Just to go back to my question about what was a good trading review –
114. A. I am sorry. I keep referring back.
115. Q. What led to a bad review?
116. A. Generally speaking, we were given slides to complete, so if we had good contractual performance, because that was plotted against the key contract indicators that we had. Frustrating things for Jerry would be things where you shoot yourself in the foot and members of staff do something that's certainly within their gift to manage and then fail. Therefore, frustrations would bubble up like that sometimes.
117. He would expect us to know our figures really clearly, so if there was any kind of indication that we hadn't done the necessary diligence on our own figures and couldn't explain what was behind them, then that could be a little bit testy at times.
118. I am trying to put myself back in those meetings. You had to have your information to hand. They did take quite a lot of prep for, and it was worth prepping for those meetings because you knew that you were going to get grilled. One of the other directors, he used to take his whole Senior Management Team into the trading reviews, and he would expect them to be accountable for their areas and answering questions. You are talking about ten people.
119. **Ms Lampard:** How many did you take in?
120. A. Normally my deputy and an HR advisor. Then I would bring in other managers up.
121. **Mr Marsden:** Steve and Michelle?
122. A. Yes, Steve and Michelle, and then sometimes I would bring other managers up to give them the experience and I thought it was helpful for them to understand sometimes where our pressure came from, what our reporting is, the governance and to see what kind of challenge we face sometimes.
123. **Ms Lampard:** Can we go back to this issue of scrutinising the contract and what they were focusing on? This issue of the Home Office and contract monitoring, you said that they didn't scrutinise the contract at all. What do you mean by that? What sort of things didn't they scrutinise?
124. A. This was probably in the first year or two of me being there, and I don't know this for sure, this is what I have been told - it is a bit anecdotal, but that they used to have two roles. One was a Home Office monitor, and one was a Home Office manager.
125. They have a team on-site that deals with some transactional type of work, and those roles were merged to become one person. Therefore, I think

historically the contract-monitoring element of that was lost more than the management going into that role, and, therefore, the contract-monitoring element wasn't as strong as it perhaps should have been.

126. Q. I will be quite clear with you, Ben, and we have talked to a couple of Home Office personnel, and I think they have conceded to us certainly now that to the extent that they did scrutinise contracts, their concerns were very much to do with delivery of the immigration agenda, so not things like overall welfare of detainees, cleaning of the centre. They did notice that, but the overall experience of detainees and the culture of the place was not really something they were terribly bothered with, although they were in the centre a lot.
127. A. Yes, that's true.
128. Q. They should and could have noticed all sorts of things that they probably didn't. Is that fair?
129. A. Yes, I think that's absolutely fair. Their primary focus was all about the removal process. Absolutely right. Of course, they care about the welfare and at different degrees, but, yes, their primary focus was the removal process.
130. Mr Marsden: Talking to someone like Paul Gasson, the impression you have is that a failure to make a charter work effectively would be –
131. A. A big deal, a big expense, big media and a big relationship issue for the Home Office.
132. Q. With G4S?
133. A. Yes, if we didn't manage them. We manage charters well, but if we didn't manage that well, then that would be a big issue for them.
134. Q. Yes, they would keep you under the cosh for –
135. A. It is not all within our control, so we are not the only –
136. Q. Sure, absolutely. We understand that.
137. A. Part of the operation, yes.
138. Q. Good tactics.
139. A. Yes, but it's –
140. Q. You could be captain.
141. A. Yes, that's right. The charters were a big deal and it takes a lot of work to put a charter together. We are just one small part of it, but there is a lot of stuff that we don't even see.
142. Q. Yes, we have observed charters going out, and so we have a good understanding.
143. A. We worked really hard, and we tried to work with Tascor to try and make those work as much as –
144. Q. I suppose what I am saying is he would be more accountable and feeling more pressure over that. It is bearing out the point Kate is making.
145. A. He would care more about ~~royal-Official~~ visits, for example. Official visits were really difficult to manage and we worked with the Home Office to try and manage that. They became quite unreasonable towards the end of my work there because the volume and late notice that they would impose on Visits staff to get people there within 30 minutes.

146. Therefore, we incurred quite a lot of performance penalties through that, and we were very clear about what we did and what we didn't. We would scrutinise an investigation and take an honest view ourselves about whether it was an excuse or there was a reason, and whether there was valid mitigation or not.
147. However, he cared much more about Visits than he did about education delivery, for example. Yes, ACDTs were important to him, but not part of his daily concern. He was more interested in the delivery of removals.
148. **Ms Lampard:** The issue of staffing levels, which hadn't been an issue for some time, one doesn't get the impression that they actually ever particularly focused on that either.
149. **A.** No. Michelle Smith did more. She was more concerned about that. I certainly had conversations with her about it. However, we were sometimes really tight with staff, and, certainly retention was difficult. Recruitment wasn't. We didn't find that especially difficult, although we did at times. It went in waves. We tried different strategies to try and recruit more people, but we are in a very competitive area there. The airport were paying more money, we had several members of staff went over there from the Security Team. Yes, staffing was a struggle at times.
150. **Q.** Okay. I think we will move on to that subject in a second. Let's go back to some of the other things I wanted to ask you about.
151. **A.** Sure.
152. **Q.** One thing that had become apparent to us, I think, looking at the relationships between the Senior Management Team, was that there was a history of dysfunctionality there. Do you accept that?
153. **A.** Perhaps you could expand a bit more?
154. **Q.** Yes, okay. It was quite an unstable team in the sense that I think 2013, 2015, 2016 three senior managers left their jobs after initiating grievance procedures, and then at the end of 2016 the Head of Security leaves following complaints by colleagues and staff that he had been bullying. It seems to us that there is quite a culture there of people not addressing problems, or addressing them in a particular way, which is to take out a grievance, and that's mirrored through the building, throughout the staffing. Does that ring true for you?
155. **A.** Yes. The history of the Senior Management Team was that three senior managers left in one go.
156. **Q.** When was that?
157. **A.** In 2012.
158. **Mr Marsden:** This is when Andy poached the –
159. **A.** Yes, Derek, Ian and Michelle. Derek was the director. Ian Danskin was the deputy, and Michelle **Dunning-Dyne** was the next in charge. They all left to go and work for a competitor to do a bid for the Heathrow IRCs, which is when I came in and I recruited Duncan Partridge, who was the deputy, and Michelle Brown.
160. **Q.** He had gone for the job, the director job, as we understand it?

161. A. Yes, I believe he had, he was also the Home Office Area Manager at the time. He had had some prison experience and IRC experience, I think, down in the South West of England, and he had come to be the Area Manager for Gatwick for the Home Office. He had gone for the director's job, and I don't know whether he had made the short list or not, or how that had been managed, but he certainly had aspirations to be the director, which started well. He started enthusiastically, positively, it seems like a long time ago now, but that was a difficult relationship. He raised a number of areas and grievances about me, which I struggled with, I don't even remember precisely what they are, and I didn't get any correspondence or outcomes, or anything in terms of detail about what they were, although a number of things were put to me when I met with Lee, who was doing the investigation.
162. Ms Lampard: Lee did two investigations for you, didn't he?
163. A. He did, yes. There was Stacie. However, I found the interview with Duncan very difficult, because my experience of him was he was very divisive within the Senior Management Team, and there was a point at which I couldn't trust anyone within the centre, not even my PA, to be honest, because she passed him an email that perhaps she shouldn't have done.
164. Q. Was that Lorraine?
165. A. No. It was before her. I can't remember her name now.
166. Mr Marsden: Duncan was being malign about this?
167. A. Very much so.
168. Q. Born out of some grievance he had with you?
169. A. Yes, which I am a bit baffled by because I am very straight, I am very steady. I am not erratic. I can down-style a manager that blows hot and cold –
170. Ms Lampard: Let me stop you there and tell you that everybody has said what a very nice person you are. We have not heard anybody say that you are erratic, difficult and unpleasant. However, this business of people putting in grievances, it wasn't just Duncan, was it? Why did that happen?
171. A. I don't know. I found them to be quite a needy SMT. They needed a lot of support; they were quite sensitive. The dynamics needed to be managed quite well between them sometimes. They all took their jobs really seriously and it depends where you differentiate the SMT, but, certainly, the top level of people like Michelle, Sarah I managed fairly recently, so that was a slightly different kind of relationship.
172. Mr Marsden: When you say Michelle, which Michelle is that?
173. A. Michelle Brown.
174. Q. Michelle Brown and Sarah -?
175. Ms Lampard: Sarah Newland.
176. A. Sarah Newland. They were quite a sensitive group, and I think you are right in the sense that I have never known a place that uses grievances to air issues. My approach is we need to get in a room and talk about it, and let's understand your point. We need someone to mediate. I come from a place where we use the restorative justice approaches to deal with these types of things. That is my fall-back position which is to want to talk about things in a reasonable way.

177. Q. Where did it come from? Have you reflected on where that came from? Was it pre-existing, do you think?
178. A. I think so, yes. I certainly found it when I came in. The employee relations' activity was quite heavy. Where does it come from? I suppose I don't want to make anybody a scapegoat and type group, but DCMs, I think, needed further investment in terms of management development, in terms of having difficult conversations, providing reasonable challenge, but doing that in a way that people could receive. I was saying this a lot to others and looked in the company as well that I wanted to improve the management development opportunities for DCMs because they are a critical group. The first-line managers often are in organisations of this kind of size because they are managing the majority of the staff who deal with the front-line, face-to-face challenge every day. We were trying to move to this, and we did it through talking to people, coaching people, reflecting on that, etc., so on a day-to-day basis we would do that. I thought the running of the operation was good, generally.
179. People, managers, first-line managers were generally good, doing the core business of running the day. However, I wanted to improve how they managed people, and I think that there was certainly room for improvement that we identified in that group to improve their management of their direct reports, and what I mean by that is it is not just in terms of giving critical feedback, but also giving positive feedback. Being present and forming much more meaningful relationships with direct reports so that they felt they would want to come and talk to them about issues, where I think sometimes that wasn't always the case.
180. Q. Can I just present something to you? You have a Senior Management Team who deal with each other by grievance. That is how they see it, the staff. There is some churn in the Senior Management Team. There is certainly some misbehaviour in the Senior Management Team, and then you have a group of DCMs who are quite operationally focused, don't really do people stuff very well, and can I add to that, that perhaps a not very present Senior Management Team. They are all quite busy, have quite a big agenda, a lot of people off, so they are filling gaps. Therefore, what staff and DCMs will tell us is that the staff don't see much of the Senior Management Team.
181. Therefore, the Senior Management Team aren't modelling those behaviours that you are talking about, and the only behaviours they are modelling appears to be tearing each other's hair out. Does that sound fair?
182. A. Yes, I think there is a bit of fairness in that. I think it is a busy centre, so I think people were under pressure. If I think about the core factors, Stacie was off for long periods of time. Others were off for periods of time too, and that did pull people, it did serve to stretch people, and I think that was difficult.
183. Q. Give me some idea, or your impressions of how present people were.
184. A. You mean actually physically in the centre?
185. Q. Physically how much time -?
186. Mr Marsden: Walking the floor?

187. **Ms Lampard:** Walking the floor? Did every member of that Senior Management Team go down on that floor every day and say "how is it going?"
188. **A.** No.
189. **Q.** How often did they do it?
190. **A.** Certainly, the duty director would be duty-bound to go around. Duty directors have a responsibility, and it is very clearly laid out that they would need to go to every place in the centre operationally, and you would have to sign a log to say that you had been to those places.
191. You had other managers who would need to go, and the expectation is that you would go to your different areas of responsibility. Juls, for example, is Residential. My expectation would be that he would have a presence on the wings at some point during the day, as a Residential Manager. The manager of Reception, I would expect –
192. **Q.** That is what you expected.
193. **A.** Yes.
194. **Q.** Do you know what they were doing?
195. **A.** I wouldn't have any evidence to back that up.
196. **Q.** Let's move on to Juls. Juls was the Residential Manager. Do you have any idea how much time he spent actually going about, encouraging people? What was your view of him as a manager?
197. **A.** He had reached his ceiling in terms of progression. Steve managed Juls, and Steve and I had some discussion around some of the things that Juls needed to develop.
198. My impression of Juls is that he knows the operational part, and he would tend to be a bit critical and barky, rather than encouraging and nurturing would be my view of Juls. He cares a lot. He is a lot deeper than he shows in some ways, but he doesn't easily go around and give praise or he can be, in my view, more critical than praising.
199. **Mr Marsden:** We have the impression that he is seen as an absent figure. People don't know what he does with his time, the officers and DCMs.
200. **A.** Okay.
201. **Q.** There was a discussion last year about him being moved. Tell us a bit about what prompted that, and why didn't it happen?
202. **A.** You will have to forgive me, I have stepped down from this for nine months, and I need to think back a little bit. I think at the time we were talking about a number of E1-level managers, and Juls had been in that role for a long time. He had been in that role since I arrived and before, so there is an element that you can get a bit stuck in your ways of doing things, and a change sometimes is helpful. That would have worried Juls, because I think Juls does have limitations, and I think stepping into something new would have been quite a challenge for him. We felt it was time for a bit of a change, and, certainly, I had discussions with Steve around it being time for a change. I can't remember, if I am honest with you, about why that didn't happen, but I am pretty sure that what we were doing at the time was we were looking at the three managers and we were looking at where they would be best positioned, and that would have involved Sara Edwards –

203. Q. Sara was going to come up and take the job?
204. A. Yes, and we thought that would be a good move. I remember thinking that would be a good move. It would be a good challenge for Sara. She was ready for a bit of change as well, and I could feel the positive bits about Sara making a bit of a change to that, and just changing the dynamics a little bit around that.
205. **Ms Lampard:** I am interested that you describe Juls as critical and barky. I absolutely agree with you. I think Steve has what we would describe as a hierarchical, militaristic, prison-like approach. Does that ring true with you?
206. A. Yes. My view of Steve is that he is a really good guy. I trust him in many ways. He is a bit eccentric and can appear a bit odd sometimes when you first meet him, and you can sometimes be a bit thrown by what he might say. Yes, he has been in the Prison Service, and then moved to G4S in Birmingham for –
207. Q. 31 years.
208. A. 30 years, yes. We presented him with his 30-year long service award. Yes, there is an element of Steve which is about hierarchy and he will feel comfort in that kind of order of things.
209. Q. You talk about the front-line managers not being very good at encouragement and they are operationally focused. I think our impression would be that the Senior Management Team's way of dealing with things is also quite directive and quite critical. How you deal with personnel issues, investigations, suspensions, is quite heavy-handed - do you accept that?
210. A. I don't know if I do. You get a view from talking to different people, but I think there is an element of that, and, certainly, there is an element of that within the company, which is there can be quite a brutal approach to that kind of issue.
211. I would say we were very careful, certainly when I was thoughtful about was suspension really needed? I would speak to other people about whether suspension was needed. I always viewed suspension as a neutral act. I know it doesn't always feel like that on the other end of it, but I felt very genuinely that suspension is a neutral act, that it is about protecting the person as much as the operation, and that there needs to be a fair and thorough investigation before any kind of judgements are made.
212. My view about disciplinaries was very much, and particularly dismissal, is I would always look for the capacity to change, because my opinion about the disciplinary process is that it is about correction, not punishment. If we had some behaviours that we didn't like that weren't in line with the policies and expectations of the contract, then we would talk about those, and if there was a disciplinary award required then we would issue one, but that needed to be consistent with others and thoughtful and about correction, not punishment. Therefore, for me, there was very much a case of dismissal -.
213. Early in my career I was told by an HR senior manager to sack somebody and I didn't. I gave them a final written warning on the basis that I believed he had the capacity to change and improve, but he did something. He was rough with a child in a restraint that led to us dismissing him because it

wasn't appropriate what he did. Therefore, my view is based on the capacity to change, or the belief that the person is able to do that.

214. **Q.** Can I slightly push back on the business of investigations and your slight justification of the extent to which they are used? There is, I know in Senior Management Team minutes we have found a minute in which Steve, I think it is says along the lines of, "we have an awful lot of investigations. People must stop trying to deal with everything by investigation." We have heard some quite extraordinary stories of things that have been formally investigated, when, really, somebody should simply have said –
215. **A.** "Come on, what's going on?"
216. **Q.** A little bit of warning –
217. **Mr Marsden:** A member of staff on their first nights who makes an ACDT entry at the wrong time suspended.
218. **Ms Lampard:** A new DCO who follows the lock-up procedure of the person who he is shadowing at the roll call and he does it wrong, and he gets disciplined, and he gets investigated and suspended for a period of time. People being suspended when they weren't even on duty on the day in question. There are so many of them that you think that was actually a bit of a culture, including one member of the Senior Manager Team wanting to investigate another member of the Senior Manager Team for appearing to fall asleep in a management meeting.
219. **A.** I am not aware of that one, I am sorry.
220. **Q.** I think it may have happened perhaps after your time, but there is something about the culture of the place, and I just wondered whether that was something to do with, again, this business of absent management and operationally-effective DCMs but not very good at people stuff? Does any of that alter your, perhaps, quite strong justification of the investigations?
221. **A.** I am not trying to justify that everything needed an investigation, because I do believe that I would much rather have a situation and try to model how this should happen. I would much rather have discussions at an early stage about issues of their practice, so that the members of staff can have some critical feedback and adjust their practice before it ever reaches a point where disciplinarys are needed. I would encourage others to do that too.
222. **Mr Marsden:** Before you arrived there is a bit of a history of ways things are done. You are describing a different management style - more facilitative, help people get things right first, and then they get the full monty if they don't. Is that with Steve?
223. **A.** I don't know. What I would also say is whenever we suspended people we always also took advice from HR. We wanted to do a centre check – they were really able, some of these, to be honest with you, and we would ask ourselves, do we really need to suspend this person? Is it absolutely necessary? Does it tick the box of there's a potentially dismissible issue here? Is there going to be any risk to the business around not dismissing? We would always involve HR in the conversation. We would always contact Gold, the next level up, which would typically be Jerry or Lee at the time to have a discussion around it and to weigh up the pros and cons.

224. Q. Did your own management style involve ever saying, "look, we are not doing it that way. Watch my lips. We are not doing it that way"? Did you ever bang the table?
225. A. I am not a table banger!
226. Q. Okay. I suppose what I am asking is how did you impose your own management style on the place?
227. A. For me, I was very keen to listen to other people, but also there comes a point where you have to say, "this is my view, and I don't believe this is a case that requires that. Let's test it out. Let's test it out with the HR business partner." I suppose what I was trying to do, if I asked the HR business partner for advice, it is around what's reasonable in the circumstances around the individual case, but also what's consistent with the rest of the business? What precedents have been set elsewhere, and what's the C&DS or G4S approach to this type of situation?
228. However, yes, absolutely, there were times when I said, "that's not acceptable. We don't need to suspend for this situation. That's too heavy. We need to be able to –" or "that person is not in for a number of days. They are off for a period. Why do we need to suspend? We can start investigations prior to a suspension needed." Or we would look to move somebody to Tinsley House, for example, or somewhere, so it is a step short of suspension, but you would move someone from their area where the issue had happened to not need to suspend because there must have been a serious issue, but it didn't require suspension.
229. **Ms Lampard:** Tell me a bit about your own management style. How did you do it? Did you find yourself on the floor a lot? Were you locked up in your having to deal with 100 slides a lot? How did you do it?
230. A. A mix of both. I would say that I would have liked to have been out and about more, and I would have liked to have been more visible. I am not sitting here saying that I was around all the time. I didn't go around every day, and I think with hindsight it would have been good for me to have done that a bit more. I did duty director shifts, which I found really useful, because –
231. **Mr Marsden:** Did you not go around because pressure of other things, or did you not go around because, actually, I don't think that's my job – I have a team.
232. A. A bit of both, I think. I didn't know what was going to happen, and I think with hindsight I would probably carve out more time each day to go and have a presence around site and to ask questions. I think sometimes if you are really stretched you can't physically get out every day. You have to rely on a team to do that, and you have to set expectations of people being present. We did some of that, particularly around meal times and roll calls, which were quite difficult between-times. Certainly, meal times, when you have the whole of the wing in one place, and we made it very clear that we expected managers to be on wings around some of those times.
233. **Ms Lampard:** Senior managers or just frontline managers?
234. A. Mainly frontline managers, but sometimes senior managers, and we expected people to go and eat with detainees. There is something very powerful about eating your meal from the servery with a group of detainees on a wing, particularly as a senior manager, because you are showing them as one standard of food.

235. Q. Did they ever do that?
236. A. Yes, I think they did. Probably not as frequently as we could have done, but, yes, I did that.
237. I would do duty director shifts and I think one of the things I reflected about is what kind of questions do we ask when we go and talk to staff? I would be duty director and I would clip my diary for the day because being duty director can hijack you, but also in Brook House, particularly, it has a lot of work involved in terms of doing all the ACDTs, and Rule 40 reviews, and those types of things. However, what I liked about it was I would need to get under the skin a little bit, go and talk to staff. Rather than just sitting around and ticking a book, which I am sure some people did, I wanted to use it as an opportunity to talk to people. I would go and spend half an hour/40 minutes on a wing and talk to the staff and talk to detainees, and just be around there for a bit and see what was going on.
238. You do reflect on these kinds of situations. I have been off for nine months. I am away from it now. I have had an opportunity, and one of the things I reflected about was how you ask the question to get the information that you want, rather than going on a wing and saying, "how are you? How is it going?" You are going to get one set of responses, whereas if you go and say, "tell me about your day", you get a slightly different set of responses, don't you, and then you can unpick the kind of information that you get, so I think the kind of questions that you ask as a senior manager to gain an insight into what really is going on is important, and I think I would take that into consideration in future similar situations.
239. Q. Can I say, and what we would get back, I think, from other people asking about your management style was that you were focused above all on maintaining good relations with the customer and the powers that be, dealing with that pressure from outside, as opposed to really the stuff inside, and that that a lot of that was left to Steve. Does that -?
240. A. Certainly, I saw my role as being one of customer-focused and managing external stakeholders. Steve did deal with the more operational day-to-day elements. He is Head of Brook House as well. Part of his role is dealing with the operational day-to-day business, so, yes, there is an expectation around that.
241. Q. I suppose now you have had time to reflect on that, do you think that, actually, you may not quite have got that balance right in the sense of not actually having quite enough understanding of the organisation and how it felt on the floor, how people were behaving?
242. A. Possibly – who knows. It is a difficult question to answer because I didn't foresee this happening.
243. Q. No, of course you didn't.
244. A. If we had have known about any of the things that had happened we would have dealt with them seriously. They are all serious issues. We have examples of where we have dealt with other issues seriously of a similar kind of nature.
245. **Mr Marsden:** Do you have an explanation as to how it came about in your own mind?

246. A. It is difficult, isn't it? How do you know what you don't know? You have a responsibility to go and find out what is going on in our places, and I have taken full accountability for what's happened, but I feel very let down by individuals because you put your trust in people. It doesn't mean to say that you don't monitor and check and do all the things that you should do, but I feel really let down by individuals who have behaved appallingly.
247. Ms Lampard: When you say the individuals, do you mean the ones who were featured in *Panorama*, do you mean other members of your team?
248. A. Certainly, those people who featured in *Panorama*. I feel really let down because we were very clear through training, and refresher training and I would give messaging out in morning briefings every day, and staff forums, and new ITCs that would come in. I talked very explicitly, very clearly, around the importance of doing our job with a very clear consideration for the human element of what we do.
249. Frankly, the Home Office didn't really care about the people we looked after, and that's a very general kind of comment and I wouldn't want it quoted in that way in the report. There are elements of people in the Home Office who did care very much, but the Home Office entity corporately was mostly concerned about the removal process and the functionality of it.
250. Q. Could I say, frankly, the Home Office corporately didn't really care about how you looked after people?
251. A. Or didn't appear to, maybe. We had a number of examples. For example, I can remember a guy who was released and he wouldn't leave and we were told that we should restrain him out of the door onto the road, and we just refused to do it. We were patient with him. We can't do that. I don't believe in that kind of practice.
252. Mr Marsden: Who was that at the Home Office? Was that Paul?
253. A. I can't remember specifically who it was, but the expectation was he needs to leave. It was the major corporate flavour. It was the feel of it, whereas my view is we must do our work. Okay, we are agents working for the Home Office and we have a job to do, and it is not our job to get involved in the decision-making process. We deliver what the contract expects us to deliver, but we must do that in a humane way and we must do it with a conscience, considering people's welfare and wellbeing.
254. Q. Was that then losing sight of the humanity of all of this, or was this, actually, we want to create a slightly more hostile environment? It sounds like more humanity, just a big machine -
255. A. The hostility - there is this hostile environment approach, isn't there, to people who shouldn't stay here in the country. There was an element of you have had opportunities to leave before now, and now you find yourself in an IRC, so you have brought on yourself a kind of attitude is what I found. I was really struck by the desperation you could see in people sometimes, because whatever the situation, whatever the decision that has been made, some of them feel very genuinely desperate about returning to their countries for whatever reason, and you see that on a daily basis. The staff are exposed to that on a daily basis, which makes it one of the most challenging jobs, I think, dealing with people who are that desperate and that challenging.

256. I watched the programme again yesterday, ahead of this, a difficult watch as it was, and it talks about the mix of people. I am sure there were people who weren't from a prison background, who came in here for just staying and not returning, and they have found it very difficult with a population of 40 per cent foreign national offenders who are experienced in living –
257. Q. In jail craft.
258. A. Yes, and all the intimidating kind of behaviour that goes with that. I am sure there are some people who have found that very difficult. We didn't have a choice about the people who came to stay with us. That wasn't our decision to determine.
259. **Ms Lampard:** Shall we move on to staffing levels? The evidence we have is that over the last few years, at least, staffing, retention and turnover have been a very significant problem at Brook House. You accept that?
260. A. Yes.
261. Q. At some point it seems that staffing levels were reduced generally across the piece. It is very difficult to understand what the staffing levels should be under the contract. So far as we can gather, the only real parameters on it are a number of hours dictated by the –
262. A. In the 24-hour period.
263. Q. In the 24-hour period, and a minimum of two DCOs on each wing?
264. A. There is another element to it in the contract. It talks about the times of day that you should have people on. However, it is complex and it is not particularly clear, and the difficulty is that not all of the changes and conversations that have happened historically have been documented, so there is a bit that is anecdotal and there is a bit of a situation where –
265. **Mr Marsden:** We agreed this a couple years ago and no one has made a note of it.
266. A. No one has any memory of it, so it is not easy to get to the root of - even though the contract wasn't that long ago, to get to the root of it.
267. **Ms Lampard:** However, at some point it seems, the evidence seems anyway, that staffing went from 36 a day as the normal profile – that was the plan, down to 32. Are you conscious of that? Did you ever have a discussion about reduction in the numbers daily?
268. A. No.
269. Q. What was your expectation of how many DCOs there would be on duty during the day?
270. A. It would have been our contractual figures. Often, to actually physically run the centre you could operate the centre on lower than what you needed contractually, and for it to be safe and every element working. However, we always aim for our contractual numbers.
271. Q. What did you think that meant?
272. A. In terms of a figure, or -?
273. **Mr Marsden:** In terms of bodies, headcount?

274. A. Around 35/36 men. That was the aspirational figure. I can't remember off the top of my head – you can work it out, can't you, with the hours per person.
275. Ms Lampard: You can't because it rather depends on things like do you designate somebody as doing escort duties, or something.
276. A. Yes.
277. Q. What we are trying to get to is what was the understanding about? John Kench, as you noted, did the rostering, and he is quite clear in his own mind that some time in 2016 there was some sort of discussion about the fact that we could trim the numbers actually during the day, and that his instructions were that there would be 32 as a daily profile. Sarah Newland suggests that there were discussions about, actually, we are going to have fewer people in the centre.
278. A. I am sorry, I don't recognise any of that.
279. Q. You don't?
280. Mr Marsden: We wondered whether it was in anticipation of the rebid.
281. A. It may have been, but, certainly, the rebid we started the profiling from scratch, not based on what we had known, so we re-profiled from the beginning, based on what the operational requirements would be for the new contract. That did produce a different staffing profile.
282. Ms Lampard: What was that?
283. A. I can't remember the figures, I am afraid.
284. Q. Was it lower?
285. A. It was certainly lower, but it wouldn't necessarily be less people on a wing.
286. Q. In your time, what did you think you needed to have on the wing in terms of DCOs and DCMs?
287. A. In terms of figures?
288. Q. Yes. During most parts of the day what was your expectation of how many people you would have on the wing?
289. A. I would always expect that there would be a minimum of two people on a wing. I wouldn't expect that to be any less than that. To have two, but I would expect there to be three, and at times four, depending on what's going on, what time of day it was. It might be that –
290. Mr Marsden: Would that be those people not accounting for other activities, or would that be –?
291. A. I would expect a minimum of two staff to be on the wing at all times. That was my expectation, and I expected the operational managers to manage that with the control room staff in terms of coordinating movements around the centre and what they had to do. However, my expectation was that you should have two people on the wing at all times.
292. Ms Lampard: What about DCMs? How many DCMs would you expect to have?

Commented [AS1]: DCOs

293. A. How many would you have - it depends on the wings. There would typically be one for two wings.
294. Q. Where did those figures come from? Do you see what I mean, because they don't meet the hours. I know that they don't meet the contractual hours if you do it that way. Where did that figure come from, where did that two on a wing, possibly three, possibly four sometimes and one DCM to two wings? Who designed that? Was that in place when you arrived?
295. A. Yes, I think that was in place when I arrived. We haven't changed any of that.
296. Mr Marsden: Your norm was what you inherited?
297. A. Yes, that's right. We hadn't changed any of those profiles.
298. Ms Lampard: Okay. When you look at what actually was happening it seems that there were a number of issues that, in a sense, added to the difficulty of achieving what needed to be on the wings.
299. First of all, there were these issues of recruitment and retention. Then you have the business of Tinsley House being shut, and then it was opened again, and that pool of staff you might have called on to keep the numbers up going back. Then you get the 60.
300. Was there ever a time when you thought to yourselves, we had better have a look at this staffing thing - we can't carry on like this, we are not achieving what we need to achieve? You felt that the two, three, four perhaps was okay, but was there ever a time when you thought, that two and one DCM for two wings isn't quite right? Did you ever re-examine that?
301. A. We always aimed for more than that. If we were left with two on a wing and one DCM, then that wasn't what we tried to achieve. That was sometimes what happened if you had absence on the day and if people wouldn't take other additional hours. We were very happy to pay people additional hours to make up any shortfall. We would look at the staffing across both sites and see if there was any kind of flex that we needed to have, if we needed to bring people up from Tinsley to manage that. Therefore, I wouldn't say that we settled for two on the wing. That was our minimum, and it would be sometimes as tight as that, but it wasn't always.
302. Mr Marsden: Did you have any sense about how operationally satisfactory two on the wing was?
303. A. Yes, I am sure it was frustrating for people, and, certainly, when they went up to 60 we would expect that to go up to three people on the wing, and we certainly wanted it, and we were certainly trying to achieve that. We talked about this at trading reviews. There was a recruitment planner that would plot recruitment and that looked at how the recruitment plan tracked the uplift in the number of detainees that came into the centre, so that you would align them. Retention was difficult. It was very difficult.
304. Ms Lampard: The 60 - then you got the 60. Tell us about the discussions about the 60. How did that come about?
305. A. That was years ago. It was a design from the Home Office, and I spoke to a chap called Richard Titcomb, who was a Commercial Manager in the Home Office several years ago about the desire to increase the bed spaces at both Brook and Tinsley.

306. From a business point of view we that was good because you can increase revenue and those kinds of things, but, equally, we wanted to be cautious. He said to me, "you could have 150 other people in here. Why just have 60?". We said, "no, come on, you have to be reasonable about this." We are working on the basis that rooms are relatively big. People have open regime during the day so they can move around and they are not locked in their rooms all the time and people should not be held in detention for long periods of time.
307. **Mr Marsden:** He seriously thought you could increase by 150?
308. **A.** Yes, that was the comment he made when we were walking around, looking at the capacity for additional beds.
309. This was quite a long time ago. Honestly, this went on for ages. The Home Office have a history of taking a long time to make a decision, and then they want it yesterday. We had talked about additional beds for a long time. We thought 60 was reasonable. In terms of the space, you could put a third in on a wing on the basis that it is an open regime, on the basis that people are not here for long periods of time, and sometimes there is a good dialogue, I think, about having three rather than two in a room from a safeguarding point of view.
310. What we didn't want to do was increase it beyond that because Brook House fills its footprint, so it is also about the communal areas, it is about the activities, it is about the kitchen facilities. It is about what the rest of the infrastructure can support.
311. **Q.** That is why 150 would be –
312. **A.** Yes, so we said, "let's do-", and Lee Hanford was involved in this conversation too. It was about, we said, "you can think about a different phase down the line, but a different phase, if you wanted to increase the numbers further you would have to think about building another storey to deal with a further activities space, because it fills this footprint. You don't have any more outside area to develop. You just have what you have."
313. **Ms Lampard:** What was the discussion? It may be that that this business of numbers is all tied up with the 60, because that is the other thing we are having difficulty with. There is a suggestion that the agreement was that there would be 17 extra staff to deal with the 60. Is that right?
314. **A.** That sounds about right.
315. **Q.** Okay, but what Lee says now is that, actually, you never recruited up to that 17 because recruitment and retention was always falling behind. Is that right?
316. **A.** Yes, that is probably right.
317. **Q.** He suggests that only recruiting three was because you were never catching up to get to the 17?
318. **A.** Yes, there is some truth in that. I think there was an absolute aspiration to fill all the vacancies that we had, all the vacancy gaps.
319. **Q.** John Kench will say that, actually, the accountants told him that you could save more money by not actually recruiting all those people and –

320. A. That is factually correct.
321. Q. Yes, and that he claims they asked John Kench whether there was a possibility of saving any more money on the deal and he said, "we are already saving money because we haven't recruited all those people." Did you hear that?
322. A. You just have to do the maths. If you think about the number of vacancies and the costs that each member of staff represents, then there is lots of saving to be had. However, our aspiration was absolutely to fill those vacancies. There was never any instruction from me about holding posts. We were very clear about that.
323. When you run an operation like this, it is quite difficult. I have run operations that have been quite close to the wire in terms of budget versus operational requirements, and when you have a recruitment process that requires vetting and clearance and you have variables that you can't really control – from the point of advert to the point of operational readiness you are talking about four months. You could have recruited, and then lost 20 people before your next one. You would have to look back at your history and see what your attrition has been like to forecast and forward plan, but it is not an exact science.
324. There was an absolute determination to fill the posts. We weren't looking to hold any, but you know that through the course of a year the ebb and flow of staff that you will end up making a bit of money out of staff vacancies.
325. Q. Okay, but that wasn't a ploy, as it were?
326. A. No, there was absolutely no ploy whatsoever.
327. Q. Now, Lee has looked at the plans that there were in place before, because given the numbers that were around on the introduction of the 60 beds. The numbers of staff it looks as though the staffing levels allow for four DCOs on the residential wings, on the bigger ones, three on B and E wings, four DCOs to man the official corridors and visits, three to manage activities; one to work in the welfare office.
328. A. Yes, that sounds about right.
329. Q. That does sound about right, okay. However, managers now say that that wasn't suitable because it didn't provide for staff breaks, constant watches, escort duties, courtyards to be managed, and you would end up often with one DCO available to take responsibility for delivering all the sports and activities programmes for 500 detainees. Therefore, in that respect it was deficient. Do you think that's fair?
330. A. That was some pull and stretch sometimes. Yes, I think that's fair. I think courtyards being staffed is not something that we would necessarily have accounted for initially. That was introduced after the escape, so that wasn't part of original plan.
331. Q. Whose idea was that?
332. A. I don't know. I was deployed in Medway during the escape.
333. Q. Okay, so you don't know where the push for that came from?

334. A. I don't know where the push came from, but I am sure it was done on a risk assessment basis that somebody had escaped. What you have previously considered to be not –
335. Q. That would be a Home Office pressure, would it?
336. A. I don't know. I think there would have been some Home Office involvement or want to be, a company desire to reassure the Home Office that we have taken some measures to mitigate that risk.
337. Q. The other one I think that particularly troubles us even before the 60 would have been the lack of DCOs to take responsibility for activities, entertainment, that sort of thing. There just isn't evidence. That was run down. We have spoken to Ramon who used to have five staff. He ended up having three. How did that happen?
338. A. Again, there was no removal of any roles. From memory, it may have been the people had moved and that left a role, or those were the roles that weren't filled.
339. Mr Marsden: It wasn't your attrition?
340. A. There were no posts removed from his cohort.
341. Ms Lampard: He will say that Juls did remove people. They just disappeared, basically. Nobody was replaced. That is what he will say.
342. A. Not roles. I don't think the roles were removed.
343. Q. However, the people were not –
344. A. He may have moved individuals to do other things – I can't remember that specifically, but certainly the roles were not removed. No one changed the profile to reduce the number of people in that cohort of staff, in that team, certainly.
345. Q. However, they just weren't filled.
346. Mr Marsden: Did you have any sense that activities over the course of the last 12 months of your tenure was not as regular as it should be? I think Ramon goes down to Tinsley, and I think at that point probably there is a huge dislocation, but we think the lack of activities in the centre is very significant when it comes to managing the regime generally.
347. A. I think it could have been done better. I think activities are often the first thing to go sometimes. I think if you are short-staffed you are prioritising some of the core and the contract, and activities and regime would be something that would go sometimes, albeit that activities also involved internet provision in the IT room, education, those types of things. One of the teachers was a custody officer, but the others weren't, so they would still run educational classes in the classroom. My view is that we probably could have been better at more structured activities that were led by activities officers.
348. Ms Lampard: The fact is we have been there a lot and the provision of activities is woeful, but it is quite clear that the rot on that did start to set in quite some time ago, i.e. early-ish 2017 when the staffing levels became a problem. To what extent are you aware of that, that the cultural kitchen wasn't opened, the programme of activities just didn't happen? What did you know about that?
349. A. I wasn't really aware about much of that. The cultural kitchen was facilitated by Aramark.

350. Q. Yes, but then they pulled out and it shut. You knew about them pulling out?
351. A. No.
352. Q. Because?
353. A. I don't know.
354. Q. Okay. Staff when you go round will say that staffing has been an issue for a long time, and they will talk about the fact that two on a wing is jolly difficult, and invariably they will say that is what it was, it was two on a wing, and I think you have accepted that two on a wing is not desirable.
355. A. No, definitely not.
356. Q. That was happening regularly, and they will say that sometimes there was only one because your mate wants to go and have a break, or something, and you start the day with four but they go, and you end up with two, and then there is only one of you on a wing. To what extent did you know that that was happening often?
357. A. I knew that it was happening to some extent, and my view was that we have operational managers who are responsible for managing the day-to-day and a lot of that goes with deployment, and this is about deployment. I would walk around and if I found a person on the wing on their own I would stay with them and I would make a phone call to see where other people were because you would find staff elsewhere in the centre. It wasn't because there weren't enough staff on duty in the centre, but sometimes there were issues about where the people were deployed.
358. **Mr Marsden:** There is also a bit of a culture of people disappearing off the wing –
359. A. Yes.
360. Q. Not returning, and the DCO on the wing thinking –
361. A. Where has my colleague gone? Yes, definitely.
362. Q. They were here 45 minutes ago, but they have been gone –
363. A. Definitely, and we did talk about that and we did challenge that.
364. Q. Your view of that, just so we are absolutely clear is, in a way, this is your expectation of operational managers. It goes back to the point you made earlier about there is this cohort of people who are meant to manage the place, and they should be getting on with managing the place, and that includes ensuring that staff are in the right place, doing the right job.
365. A. Yes, I think that's right. We have to check that that's been done properly, but I think that's right.
366. **Ms Lampard:** If you look at the rosters, which we have. We looked at who was there, it was much worse after *Panorama*, but before *Panorama* the numbers didn't look terribly good either. The numbers in the centre, it was around the 32-mark, it wasn't the 36-mark, and sometimes it is 29 –
367. **Mr Marsden:** And lower.

368. **Ms Lampard:** That was happening before *Panorama* as well as after *Panorama*, and so that would suggest only partly an answer to what you are saying about poor management. If you don't have the bums on the seats you are not –
369. **A.** No, I agree.
370. **Q.** I just wondered how much you knew that, actually, you weren't really able properly to manage to produce even what you thought was probably the right thing to do?
371. **A.** Yes, we were aware of it. You can't magic staff out of the air. It is a long process to get the right people recruited. We tried to focus on retention because attrition was high.
372. **Mr Marsden:** Did you ever feel you got under the skin of why people left?
373. **A.** We did exit interviews and we talked about those. I talked about those with Michelle Fernandes in terms of the reasons people were leaving.
374. **Q.** What were the reasons?
375. **A.** Typically, it was shift work, the shifts, issues that a rota pattern would throw up. Sometimes wanting a change. In the Gatwick area there are lots of job opportunities. We joked for a while because you could walk through the security in Gatwick airport and you would see half a dozen ex-Tinsley members of staff. I think some of them came back because the grass wasn't always greener.
376. We were paying people a reasonable salary, but I think at that level money is important and in a good way you can get a better offer, but also your work experience is important, and if you are faced with challenging detainees on a daily basis that can be quite hostile and quite difficult, then that becomes a more challenging prospect.
377. Families have an influence on people. If you are dealing with difficult people you go home talking about it to family and friends. People are not naïve enough to think that there is nothing from a management support point of view that would help, so if you are feeling stressed because of whatever – you feel a bit isolated, or you are not having support from your manager, or someone has been critical of you that you don't think it is justified, it ends up at a point where people will go.
378. I have looked at this previously, and my experience is that your view of the company is often your line manager. If you are not getting what you need from your line manager, then that can be difficult too.
379. **Q.** That goes back to your point about –
380. **A.** The first-line managers.
381. **Q.** The importance of that DCM grade.
382. **A.** Yes. I accept that the staffing levels weren't always brilliant and the times were very tight. We were aware of that. We were not holding off on recruitment. We were trying to recruit as many people as we could so that we could get the numbers, but it is a tricky, complex situation to manage.
383. **Q.** It is difficult work, people have choices, poor front-line management, difficult population. It is a mixture of ingredients that –

384. A. Yes.
385. **Ms Lampard:** Some people will say that a lot of that ended up meaning that people from Tinsley had to be pulled in quite often to meet Brook House -
386. A. It depends what quite often means. There were times when that happened, absolutely, yes. There were times when that was necessary.
387. Q. It has been suggested that there were occasions when you were happier to do that than leave the gaps at Brook House, i.e., make the gaps at Tinsley rather than Brook House because it would be cheaper to be fined for Tinsley than it was for Brook House.
388. A. That is true. The penalty points for staffing, for everything were cheaper at Tinsley than they were at Brook.
389. Q. I think it is a statement of the obvious and -
390. A. That is a fact.
391. Q. That is how it was managed sometimes to try and minimise the pain?
392. A. If you are going to take a hit, why wouldn't you take it in the place where it is going to cause you less financial impact?
393. Q. Yes.
394. A. Also, arguably, less operational impact. I am sure you have been around Tinsley several times, but it is a very different place. It is much more open. It is like a wing in some ways, but it is much more open and free so you can -
395. **Mr Marsden:** Also, the tagging is -
396. A. Totally different, and Tinsley is more of the ideal IRC model that the Home Office would prefer.

[Pause in recording]

397. **Ms Lampard:** Let's go back to recruitment and retention. A lot of people have suggested that that 13-and-a-half-hour shift is something that they find very draining. There was a renegotiation of the contract, I think, at the beginning of 2017. Prior to that time were people on different contractual hours? Were they all always on 13-and-a-half hours?
398. A. Since I have been there, yes.
399. Q. Okay.
400. A. I have never been a big fan, I have to be honest.
401. Q. No.
402. A. Previously, I think you are talking about the contracts, when we did the negotiation with the POA around pay talks, it is written in the commercial contract, strangely. The contract said that the officers would have a 48-hour working week.
403. Q. 38 hours - what is that?
404. A. 48 hours working week, which is right up against working time limitation. I have never known weekly hours set in a commercial contract in that way, but that's what the contract says. I have always known DCOs at Brook House to be on 48-hour contracts, whereas at Tinsley it is 42. We were quite keen to

move away from that and found a way of doing that with the POA where people wouldn't lose any money. We gave quite a generous offer in terms of reducing the hours to 46, but not lowering the salary, which meant that the hourly rate increased for some people by quite a lot, by 4 per cent, from memory. Others didn't get quite the same, because at Tinsley there are three different levels of DCO salary, which we wanted to align, which wasn't universally liked by some of the people who didn't gain so much. However, we agreed with the POA, and we wanted an equality position.

405. Q. Therefore, it doesn't have any effect or any bearing on the hours on the shift pattern?
406. A. No, but as part of doing that we looked at shift patterns to look at whether there was anything we could do and we talked with the POA about what kind of shift patterns we could have, and the vast majority chose to remain with longer shifts. Therefore, I take the point completely. I don't like long shifts, and I think the difficulty around breaks comes with long shifts because if you have people working seven-and-a-half-hour or eight-hour shifts they don't have the same kind of need for a break within their shift, and you wouldn't need to incorporate that into your daily workings.
407. Some members of staff would have left, however. There would have been attrition, because some people like the long hours. If they have further to come they have to work less days a week.
408. Q. We have met some of them who have justified it and said it suits them very well.
409. A. Yes.
410. Mr Marsden: Yes, they don't pay so much in petrol.
411. A. That's right, so it is one of those, really. You can't win with those types of things. It is really about going with the majority, and that's what we tried to do. We wanted to be consultative around it with the staff team, but you have to make a decision one way or another to what you are prepared to operate, and at the time, the majority preferred to have the longer shifts.
412. Ms Lampard: The other big issue that has come up about retention is how little people are prepared for going into the centre. They go through the ITC and then they get in to work in the centre and it is not what they feel they are comfortable with, and there have been lots of discussions about ways to try and get them into the centre sooner. I just wonder if you can recollect any of those discussions you might have had with the Home Office and what became of them, because they seem to have floundered on the issue of security and consent from the Home Office.
413. A. Sorry, how do you mean?
414. Q. Taking people on the ITC into the centre –
415. Mr Marsden: Before checked.
416. Ms Lampard: Before they have been checked, and before they had authorisation.
417. A. Yes, you have been to the training room in the Brook House gatehouse, that is where the ITCs take place, and there was a point when we were doing some work around clearances that the Home Office was saying that we couldn't

hold our ITCs in that training room because in order to be working by the Home Office contract you had to be CTC-cleared. Therefore, we negotiated with the Home Office to say, frankly, don't be ridiculous. That goes with the message coming through the Home Office. Their corporate line is that unless you have CTC clearance you can't work on a Home Office contract. We said, "let's draw the line between the gatehouse and the secure line of the centre, and let's make a sensible decision. Why would you exclude people from a training room that's designed to train people? Where would you suggest we do it? Offsite is a bit crazy." We talked about it, about how we could do that and there were the facilitators who were actively staffed all the time, anyway.

418. Q. However, when we went to Heathrow they are allowed in, they do allow their trainees into the centre, and they allow them in escorted at times when the detainees are not even locked up. Did you ever have any awareness of that?
419. A. No, I wasn't aware of that.
420. Q. Did the Home Office discuss that with you?
421. A. No.
422. Mr Marsden: Healthcare at Brook House also interview people for jobs in the centre.
423. A. Yes, we bring them in all the time, the visitors, who are not cleared, and we escort them. I didn't have a particular problem with it at all.
424. Ms Lampard: Did you ever try and push back on all of that?
425. A. Yes, definitely.
426. Q. I think it is still continuing.
427. A. What we did was we introduced an extra week in the ITC in order to have experience in the centre, in the middle of it so that you had to be CTC-cleared to do it, but you could come on board. You didn't have keys because you hadn't completed all of your ITC, but you would shadow.
428. Mr Marsden: You were unescorted in the sense that you weren't being treated as a visitor?
429. A. No, you weren't being treated as a visitor, but you didn't have keys so you had to be escorted, to be honest with you, in order to get around.
430. Ms Lampard: Why did that stop, I wonder?
431. A. That shouldn't have stopped. I don't know why that stopped. There was a week put in so that you could come. The difficulty is, we developed part of the course, which was go and have a tour of the site with somebody else, so you were escorted like a visitor. There was a week of shadowing that you could do that enabled you to experience it and then go back into the classroom where you can have further discussions. If you are just being talked at with PowerPoints and other kinds of modules you don't have a frame of reference to draw on, and it can be a bit –
432. Mr Marsden: Yes, very different.
433. A. You have to imagine, don't you, rather than actually seeing it.
434. Q. Yes, and half of these IT people don't know about the ITC.
435. A. No, that is right.

Commented [AS2]: Not sure what this means, doesn't seem to make sense.

436. **Ms Lampard:** That wasn't the shadowing at the end that they all do?
 437. **A.** No, they definitely had it in the middle, in about the fourth week, or something like that.
438. **Mr Marsden:** Was that issue of how the ITC operates and access to the centre ever discussed at a trading review with Jerry?
 439. **A.** No.
440. **Q.** Is it something that G4S have ever tried corporately to resolve?
 441. **A.** No, I don't think it is, to be honest.
442. **Q.** Although it is key when it comes to retaining staff, isn't it?
 443. **A.** Yes, it is one of the key elements.
444. **Q.** The first thing that people think on arriving in the centre is, oh my God, I wasn't expecting this.
 445. **A.** Yes, that's right.
446. **Q.** Brook House is particularly turbulent.
 447. **A.** Yes, and I remember a few groups after a month of them being in the centre gave some feedback, and one of the things that they fed back on was they would like more scenario-based training in the ITC, and more things like when you go and work in a wing office, what kinds of things do you have to do? It is the day-to-day stuff. It's the things that detainees might catch you out at or that might cause tension because you are a bit slower in the first few weeks because you are just coming up to speed with the systems and recording methods. When you phone down to Property to book an appointment for someone to go down there, it might seem quite small, but they are quite big when you first come into the centre, and it is that transition from ITC to operational that's tricky, isn't it, until you find your feet.
448. **Ms Lampard:** Apart from those sorts of issues about retention, I think there is a general sense that we get from staff that they don't really feel very valued. They don't feel G4S values them. The pay is not good, that nobody pays you any more for staying longer, you get a long-service pen that you can't even use in the centre because it is blue and not black.
 449. **A.** That is a bit old. I think that's the older people who would have said that.
450. **Q.** However, there is just that sense. Do you have -?
 451. **Mr Marsden:** Also, the shirt, how people describe -
452. **Ms Lampard:** Also, the shirt, yes. Does that sound familiar to you that people don't feel very valued?
 453. **A.** Yes.
454. **Mr Marsden:** Would that be true at your level?
 455. **A.** I have to think carefully about that one. I think we are valued to an extent, but it goes back to what I was talking about at the beginning of the conversation which was that I think G4S could care more about its employees. I have had this conversation with others before now, that G4S is a service-based business, so it's the employees that make the business work, that make a difference.

456. Q. They are the asset.
457. A. Yes, precisely. Therefore, more investment in people would serve G4S better if it wanted to adopt a longer-term strategy for success.
458. **Ms Lampard:** You have talked about developing DCMs, we have heard about that centrally we have been told this is not really an organisation that does learning development very much, and that I think is the point you are making.
459. A. I would agree.
460. Q. You agree, it doesn't have a culture of learning?
461. A. No, and we were going down the apprenticeship route. I am sure that is still progressing because there is money that goes with it, and I am sure that will be positive. That was certainly the direction of travel.
462. There was a Learning Development Manager/Director, Jane Shannon. I am not sure what she is doing now. She may have gone over to a more group position, and she is very good. I had a very good relationship with her. She is very enthusiastic and keen.
463. However, historically, when times are hard and there is a real focus on cost and profit, then within G4S some of these central roles and functions seem to disappear. I think there is an element of, okay, if you get rid of those roles it is a bit like quality assurance. There is a guy who works for Jerry called Michael Gibson, who's a Quality Assurance Manager. There hasn't always been that role for Jerry, and I think that has been some of Jerry's frustration. As I understand it, he had to put a business case to recruit Michael. There is something set in our contract around having an external quality manager, but it is those kinds of roles where I think they are very quick to go when times get tough financially, and I think, okay, you can sustain the legacy for a short period after that, but then I think you start to see the dip in quality after a period.
464. Q. Just moving on to issues about what was going on in the centre. Cleanliness appears to have been a major issue for a long time. What did you know about that, or was that a Steve issue rather than a you issue?
465. A. It was a Steve issue, but I was conscious of it. It is certainly something that is important to me. We had a reputation for being a clean centre at Brook House, and, certainly, the Home Office auditor who came round would always consider us to be an exemplary to the others on the estate. I do think standards have slipped.
466. **Mr Marsden:** When do you take that to?
467. A. It is difficult to put my finger on it. A year maybe.
468. **Ms Lampard:** Yes, there is evidence that you were fined at the beginning of 2017 nine days because of it. I don't know what 'nine days' means. Does that nine days of penalties?
469. A. Yes.
470. Q. There is a specific cleanliness penalty for each day?
471. A. From memory, it is wrapped up in delivering the cleaning schedule.
472. Q. Right, okay.

473. A. The contract is quite funny. You can miss half an hour of internet provision and –
474. Q. Yes, and that's a day down.
475. A. That is regime. If you haven't delivered internet you could not have delivered the whole of the rest of the regime, and you still will only have been penalised one day. However, it can take so little to cause that penalty. I think that detainee labour was relied upon for cleaning communal areas, so that's the variable that is difficult to manage. The contract, from memory, doesn't stipulate whether it should be detainee labour or not, but the model that G4S put in for the bid was that we would use detainee labour to manage that.
476. Therefore, there was no in return, apart from Aramark that did other areas. The wings, the showers, and those kinds of things were done by detainee labour, paid work.
477. Q. That was always your understanding?
478. A. Yes, and so there is a paid work coordinator that would promote that.
479. Mr Marsden: Therefore, it worked well at one point?
480. A. Yes. It depends sometimes on detainee population, who is eligible to work. In order for people to be eligible for work the Home Office have to approve them. Security have to approve them. They have to be on enhanced level. Therefore, if your numbers go down in the centre population-wise, then that can have an impact on it. You have to check the quality of the work, you have to train people to be able to do the cleaning.
481. Ms Lampard: However, if you have staff pressures, you are not going to have anybody managing that.
482. A. No, that is right.
483. Q. Therefore, it is another victim of that problem.
484. Mr Marsden: It also becomes that DCMs not managing staff –
485. A. Yes.
486. Q. Not feeling any sense of ownership.
487. A. Yes.
488. Q. Why should I bother?
489. A. Yes, that's right, and we talked about it a lot. We talked about standards, particularly with Juls, because it sat with Juls in terms of responsibility. We talked about how Juls would influence, and I spoke with Juls myself, but I also spoke with Steve about his management of Juls and how we were going to get the best out of him, how he was going to have a sustainable influence over his direct reports, positively motivating them. However, ultimately, it is about how we make people do what we want them to do in the most positive way. Juls was aware of that. Juls had been spoken to about that.
490. I think you are right, staffing issues do have an impact, but I was very clear that we have to have standards of cleaning. Cleaning in a place like Brook House, or Medway, or wherever it is, is fundamental. The message you give as a person who's working there, if you don't pick up on stuff, is that you don't care about the people, and that is when things start to become more difficult

because if you have people in your care who don't feel you are caring for them, they will start to go into survival mode, and that is when they can become unsafe. Therefore, it is a fundamental that the place should be clean, absolutely.

491. **Ms Lampard:** The other stretches, as it were, that we have identified are things like there was no induction going on. The induction wing got used for other people, and then the induction process fell apart. Did you know about that? What do you know about that?
492. **A.** I don't know the extent to what you are describing it falling apart. Yes, there were times when the induction wing had to be used for population pressures, and those kinds of things. However, I didn't know, and I am not aware of the process falling apart.
493. **Q.** I suppose probably, and I don't know for certain, but it doesn't seem to have anybody gripping the induction, was there a DCM card who understood that induction was their responsibility, everybody had to have it. Therefore, we have an image of the wing being used for other purposes, people being dislocated round the centre, some managers going round and looking for people to give them an induction, but an awful lot of it not being systematic, and I just wondered whether any of that filtered up to you?
494. **A.** No, not to the extent that it was dysfunctional. The HMIP had a view around the induction process for people who didn't make it into the induction wing, but my view was that the induction process is really clear. Induction with officers were very clear about it.
495. **Mr Marsden:** That would be a Juls responsibility?
496. **A.** No. That would be safeguarding; it was under Michelle, and then Michelle moved into the Head of Security role –
497. **Ms Lampard:** I think that is where we may find some issues too, because, of course, you had a period, quite a long period where Security was not being covered because Michelle –
498. **A.** Neil had left.
499. **Q.** Neil had left, and it wasn't until June that Michelle came in. Were you aware of some of the issues that that caused? For instance, prisons files weren't reviewed, SIRs and incident reports weren't investigated, searches weren't being done, and security and safe communications and investigations it was announced that it wasn't happening. That was the stretch. Were you were of that stretch?
500. **A.** I was aware that there was some stretch. The feedback that I had was that it was being managed, it was manageable.
501. **Mr Marsden:** Who did that come from?
502. **A.** Steve. I am not saying it was easy, but that was Steve.
503. **Ms Lampard:** The other one that particularly I think concerns us is the use of force. We know that there are problems with use of force instructors across the piece, that is part of having them in the system, but the use of force coordinator I think left in about 2016 – some time ago. Do you recollect that? Basically, thereafter, the use of force system appears not to have been very well followed because there weren't people to review footage and the meetings didn't happen on a regular basis. Were you conscious of that?

504. A. Yes, I was conscious of that. The use of force coordinator moved – he was one of the people identified in the programme.
505. Q. Yes, but there was a previous one who had left, is that right, and there was a period without one, is that right?
506. A. John Connolly was the use of force coordinator. He moved into an activities role. I am trying to think when it was because it was in 2016 and I wasn't there for half the year, and I think Lee might be able to shed some light on it, but I think there was a decision that there wasn't any justification for a use of force coordinator. My view is that there is a need for a use of force coordinator.
507. Q. Whose view was that that you didn't need to have one?
508. A. I think it was Lee. Lee was certainly in that conversation, but –
509. Q. He has put his hands up to say there was no use of force coordinator after 2016 and he has now given us the assurance that the use of force was not good.
510. A. I agree. I think it could have been better.
511. Mr Marsden: Just so I am clear, John Connolly had moved to a different role?
512. A. Yes, he moved to activities at Tinsley.
513. Q. At the point that he featured in *Panorama*?
514. Ms Lampard: No.
515. A. No.
516. Mr Marsden: What I am saying is, at that point he is no longer involved with use of force?
517. A. No, he was an instructor, but he wasn't the use of force coordinator.
518. Q. Fine, okay.
519. A. Training picked up the coordination of the actual training. The other function you want is the review of incidents, using body-worn camera footage, CCTV, interviewing staff.
520. Ms Lampard: That, you need a coordinator for, don't you?
521. A. I think that would have been a much better model. We tried to do it with use of force instructors and asked them to review the footage and the incident reports, and then provide us with a review and critique of the incident.
522. Q. Your meetings, you did have them scheduled, but they don't often happen?
523. A. I don't think we fully cracked the Use of Force Committee meeting issue, to be honest with you. We talked about it. I had a very good reference point of what that looked like from my experience in Medway and we went into a lot of detail, a lot of management information around it. However, we didn't fully crack how we could achieve it at Gatwick. We talked about it, Steve and I, about what kind of thing we would implement, and I am sure they would have done it now because it is a key issue, but that would have been helpful. I don't think it would have flagged up the incidents we saw on *Panorama*, to be honest, because you can only review what you know about.

524. **Mr Marsden:** What, as a matter of interest, would you have seen Steve's role in the use of force and the governance around it as being?
525. **A.** I think Steve would have chaired that meeting.
526. **Q.** I suppose what I am saying is if you put this in the context of *Panorama* it is a pretty startling finding, but the varying review process that might look at behaviour and appropriate restraints wasn't actually functioning.
527. **A.** I half accept that, because I think if you were to ask me what good practice or best practice looks like, then, yes, absolutely, there should be a meeting, multidisciplinary, reviewing of information, incidents, CCTV, body-worn camera footage. Body-worn camera footage particularly, because it gives you sound, and that is really important in terms of understanding the tone of de-escalation, the kind of words that we used that is going on.
528. The Use of Force Committee meeting would not have prevented the incident in the room. All those members of staff knew that it should have been reported, in my opinion, and they were influenced not to report it.
529. **Q.** Yes, absolutely.
530. **A.** Therefore, I don't think you can hang everything on the Use of Force Committee wasn't in existence.
531. **Ms Lampard:** Except that a Use of Force Committee you say wouldn't have cracked it, but a Use of Force Committee might well be looking at how do we influence behaviours?
532. **A.** Yes.
533. **Q.** How do we ensure that people only use appropriate restraint?
534. **A.** Yes.
535. **Q.** Also, that other people have the space to come to us and say, "do you know what, I didn't like that."
536. **A.** Yes.
537. **Q.** Those are the sorts of governance issues you might expect that committee to look at?
538. **A.** Yes, I accept that.
539. **Q.** That is not a guarantee they would be successful.
540. **A.** No, they wouldn't have been. There is no guarantee of that, and also I have examples of people coming to me to say that they weren't happy with something that happened, and we acted upon it. We dismissed people on that basis.
541. **Q.** Yes, there were some good examples of that.
542. **A.** It is a strange one. I would completely accept that a Use of Force Committee meeting would have been best practice, and we were talking about how we could do it and what we could do, and the importance of it. There is no dispute from me. I think it is vitally important for us, but it is not the sole answer to why these things happen in places.
543. **Ms Lampard:** Is it your recollection that you had planned a Use of Force Committee and it just didn't happen, or that, in fact, you hadn't got to the point of having established the Use of Force Committee?

544. A. I think there have been some attempts to try and get those meetings off the ground. I am not quite sure why they didn't, but they didn't really happen. Steve was doing some work on it.
545. Mr Marsden: Is it Steve's responsibility to make that happen? I am just trying to pin down in my own mind where responsibility for that is.
546. A. Ultimately, it is me to drive it. I am not trying to shirk my responsibility here, but, ultimately, I was the Director and it was for me to be able to say, "this needs to happen, and it needs to happen now." We experienced some frustration getting it off the ground and getting it embedded, and we revisited it to say, "come on, what's the reason that this hasn't happened? This needs to happen."
547. Ms Lampard: You had some instructors looking at footage?
548. A. Instructors looked at every incident of force, and there would be records of the reviews, because they wrote records of reviews about whether there was appropriate action taken, good practice, whether there was any –
549. Q. Did you oversee those? Did you go and look at them yourself?
550. A. Yes, and Steve did. Then we would follow up, have conversations with staff around it. I was very keen, especially after the Medway experience, because I went back there for six months after the *Panorama* programme, and I was very keen for there not to be a blame-type culture, because my experience of Medway was that was a fear of what the consequences might be. Therefore, I was very careful in my language and in morning briefings I would talk about accountability because we all have accountability, we all have to justify our actions, but there were also lessons to be learned, and let's talk about it in terms of a lessons-learned exercise. Particularly something like reviewing a situation of restraint, which becomes quite emotive. People can still have feelings related to it, so the timing of talking to people is important.
551. However, equally, it is okay for us to go and say, "there are things that you could have done a bit better here. With the benefit of hindsight, do you think you could have acted differently, and will you take that into your next situation where you find yourself in similar circumstances? You could position yourself differently. You could have done this differently, or spotted this earlier." There are lots of different things.
552. We have to have all been accountable, and if there were serious issues that needed to be addressed, then, of course, that needs to be addressed formally, but, equally, there is room for some conversations about best practice and where you could learn from the situation.
553. Q. I have one other big area I wanted to talk about, which is I want to go back to the issue of supporting staff. You talked about your experience as a social worker, and the idea of reflective practice. Ed is a clinician by background, it is all about supervision and reflection, and trying to deal with how you responded to something. That is something that we have not found at all with IRCs. The idea that hot and cold debriefing, it is somebody apparently turns to people at the end of an incident just to say, "are you okay", and that is about it, but no culture of sitting down and saying "did we get that right? Did we get that wrong?" Is that your experience?
554. A. No. I have experience of hot and cold debriefs at Brook House. My experience is incidents that I have been involved in, or involved in managing,

and they are more serious. However, I would be less confident about low-level incidents.

555. **Mr Marsden:** Was that driven by you?

556. **A.** Which bit?

557. **Q.** The reflection, the let's sit down and let's talk about it?

558. **A.** Yes, to an extent.

559. **Q.** Would Steve do it, for example?

560. **A.** Yes, I think Steve would see the benefit of that. I am not sure he would drive it quite the same way, but he would see the benefit of it.

561. I appreciated Steve's input because I think we are different people, and I helped him in some ways reflect and take a bit more time to think and to consider how he came across and to consider some of the conversations he had. Steve is a bit of a thinker, and so I could say something to Steve and I wouldn't be sure necessarily whether he got the point at the time, but then later, within a day, or later in the week he would come back and talk about it. He had thought about it quite a lot, and he had obviously digested it because of the way he was talking to me, and I would see it. I have seen him work through some difficulties with senior managers, as well. Him and Michelle had some difficult interactions initially, and he worked through some of those difficulties with Michelle to the point where they became much more effective in terms of how they managed each other. There is a picture that Steve struggles to do that. I think he doesn't necessarily present that he finds that easy, because he is a man's man, and all that kind of army, hierarchical stuff, but he does think and he does reflect.

562. **Ms Lampard:** After *Panorama*, which must have been very traumatic, very traumatic, what did you do about trying to talk both the Senior Management Team and the staff through what had happened and what the response might be?

563. **A.** I would need to try and tap into that a little bit. That is quite hard. It was a hard period for me.

564. **Q.** I am sure it was.

565. **A.** The trouble is is that initially the news broke. I came back from holiday, and we were planning for a presentation with the Home Office around the contract renewal, so I came back from holiday in order to do that, and learned that I was presenting. Therefore, I was doing my prep for it when I got a phone call from a member of staff to say, "I have a letter that I am a bit concerned about", and then another phone call happened. They phoned me directly to say, "I have this, and I need to talk to you about it. I am worried." Then another member of staff called while I was on the phone to him saying that he had the same. That was how the news arrived to me, and then obviously I contacted my manager to say I had received this straightaway, and learned that, centrally, we had received all the information.

566. News spreads because staff talk, so immediately it is horrible because you just see people doubting you. They are colleagues. The trust goes and that is really difficult to manage because you are forever looking over your shoulder. Until you have identified who it is that has been doing the filming people look at each other. You would see people on wings just not knowing whether they

could trust their colleagues. You would be questioning, how has this happened, because the kind of behaviour that was being talked about was not typical in the centre. That was not the culture. There are some brilliant people who do a brilliant job. People felt pain, because, as a centre, you all get tarred with the same brush when something happens like this because you are a representative. You wear uniforms and those allegations can be quite difficult. Certainly, after the programme aired, that was very difficult.

567. I spent a lot of time talking, walking around, being present, talking to people, trying to reassure people, and being honest with people and saying, "this is going to be difficult. Let's face it, this is going to be difficult."
568. **Ms Lampard:** Did you and the Senior Management Team have a session about how you were actually going to deal with this, what the stages are? Do you remember having a powwow with them?
569. **A.** I remember getting together and just having a bit of a, okay, this is going on. We need to stay together, be strong for each other because it will be difficult. Be strong for our staff because it will be super-difficult for them. They will be faced with detainees who will see the programme. It was very obvious to me that we wouldn't try and prevent people watching the programme. My approach is that we should be very upfront and honest about it. We talked about how we would deal with detainees, how we would approach the detainees to explain that we had taken immediate action to suspend those people. Where there were allegations we tried to make sure people felt safe. I met with the detainees around that, to talk about that, to the orderlies and to different people. Yes, we did a lot of work to go and try and reassure people.
570. We did similar with the Home Office. Sometimes the Home Office aren't very good at talking to detainees. Detainees would come and talk to us because we are not the people removing them, but the Home Office were a bit shy outside of the formal visiting corridor where they have a degree of protection. They varied; I have to be honest. Paul Gasson would be very different in his approach to Debbie Weston. Do you know Debbie? Have you met Debbie? They are very different people, Debbie is quite brash, but she is also very happy and very keen to go and talk directly to detainees and be very open and honest with them. Paul wouldn't go out and Paul wouldn't talk to the detainees. He would be much more office-based and would shy away from that kind of interaction.
571. I can remember working with Alan Gibson on how we were going to manage some of this tension, or potential tension and look at what we could do, and part of that was saying that we were going to have a G4S manager, which was Steve and Debbie who would go and meet, they would walk around and have forums, points where detainees could come and speak to them. Debbie wouldn't be able to manage immediately any immigration issues, because most of the issues that they have are about immigration, and they didn't find it very easy to access Home Office people.
572. **Q.** You mentioned the bid, and that you were coming back to deal with the bid. How much of your time was that bid taking up last year?
573. **A.** Quite a lot of time. The bid plus the mobilisation of the 60 beds, the reopening of Tinsley House, the refurbishment of Tinsley House, dealing with the commercial issues. We were very transparent with the Home Office, again, around that. We had a meeting where we put the figures up on the screen,

talked through what was spent so far and what was left, and how we could manoeuvre costs. We were very transparent with them about it. There was quite a lot of time spent on those –

574. Q. Big issues.
575. A. Big issues.
576. Q. Rather than the nuts and bolts of what was in the centre?
577. A. Yes.
578. Q. I think what we would say, and tell me if I am barking up the wrong tree, by last summer you had staffing issues, you had a lack of activities and entertainments for your detainees, you had very stretched staff, you had under-trained, under-capacity DCMs, and the staff living in a culture of slight investigation, a bit of fear, a bit of grievance, which means that they are very reliant on each other, and they form these bonds and you can see why nobody wants to grass anybody up.
579. A. Yes.
580. Q. That, I think, we feel is the background against all of this. That is not to say you would have identified any of these people or you knew about it, but you can see how those things happen in a place that is suffering under those sorts of pressures?
581. A. Yes, I can see that.
582. **Mr Marsden:** The sense of one or two people who had perhaps not the right attitude gaining currency and gaining power over influencing people, other DCOs because the DCM operational management driving at values, this is how we do it –
583. **Ms Lampard:** Particularly when you have people who are prized for what you have described as, which is their operational prowess.
584. A. Yes.
585. Q. 'He is going to be good in a crisis. He will see me through. The fact is he likes a bit of C&R, a bit of beating up, but what the hell?'
586. A. I don't –
587. Q. I have to say, this is an issue on which, perhaps, there is less evidence, but there is certainly still the culture of DCMs, even after we have stripped out the ones who have misbehaved. It is very male.
588. A. Yes.
589. Q. It is very macho.
590. A. Yes.
591. Q. It is very physical, and you can see younger, inexperienced staff defer to that, and that's the thing we are identifying.
592. A. I am sure that is why –
593. **Mr Marsden:** What value it is getting a grip –
594. A. Get the job done.
595. Q. Yes, deal with the insurrection on C wing, stand up and be counted.

596. **Ms Lampard:** As opposed to some of that softer stance and the let's think about the values of this place, let's think about how we want to behave.
597. **A.** Yes, and how to do that with the staff team, because it is the staff team that are going to make it work, and not just putting your foot down.
598. I would say that there was a mix. I don't know what the current situation is, but, certainly, there were some DCMs that were more singular in how they would go about things than others, and others that would be more thoughtful, and there were others that would be very good managers of their people. Some newer ones were very good managers of people, and that's the feedback we got from their DCOs who were reporting that they were very supportive, very present on the wings, very helpful in situations where detainees were being quite difficult and they would help come and diffuse the situation, and they would talk about it afterwards in terms of how they could develop and what they could have done differently. I think there were examples of others that were more absent, that would have come in, problem solve quickly and then they would leave people in difficult situations that they would find stressful at times.
599. It is very difficult to nail those down sometimes because things like that can happen, unless, of course, someone comes to you and is explicit with you that it becomes a bit anecdotal. I am very keen to have those conversations, and even if you don't have any kind of evidence to say, "what it could look like, and this is what my expectation is. Please make sure that you do it in this way." However, it is very difficult to get into that detail in every single occasion when you might just have a feeling that something is not quite right and you don't have the hard evidence to say that it is not.
600. **Q.** Ben, I think we have taken up enough of your time. Ed, do you have any more questions?
601. **Mr Marsden:** No. We have been going two-and-a-half hours.
602. **Ms Lampard:** I think we have really put you through the wringer. Thank you very much indeed. Is there anything that you wanted to say to us that we haven't discussed?
603. **A.** This is not an easy situation to be in. I am not saying for a moment that circumstances were perfect. I have reflected a lot on what could I have done differently, and I am sure that there are things that I could have done differently, but that is always very easy with hindsight.
604. I think that some of the things you have said in terms of circumstances, yes, a lot of establishments will go through similar ebbs and flows through its lifetime, and they are complex organisations to manage. I think some of the parallels you have drawn in terms of the Senior Management Team, yes, there have been difficult dynamics with the Senior Management Team. There is also good quality in there and a lot of safeguards that worked really well.
605. I am completely gutted that what's happened has happened because, not ultimately me coming out of my job, but more about the fact that I care passionately about wanting to do a good job and wanting, therefore, my team to do a good job in protecting people. Therefore, I am appalled by what's happened in there, and I wish I could have identified that better at the time, and then if we knew what was going on at the time, or if we knew there was a culture

of, if that had come to that – I don't think there was a culture of that across the whole centre.

606. Q. No.

607. A. I do believe it is pockets of individuals that have behaved in a poor way, because I really think that the vast majority of people do a great job in the face of challenging, difficult circumstances.

608. **Mr Marsden:** We met many DCOs and DCMs who we have seen do a fantastic job. I could name people today who you would want on your team.

609. A. Yes, and I would probably say the same names.

610. Q. Yes, probably.

611. A. I wish Calum Tully had fulfilled his responsibility of following the safeguarding policy and raising concerns at the time, because we would have dealt with them absolutely appropriately and properly.

612. **Ms Lampard:** I am sure you would.

613. A. I think all the other indicators that you take, so you do all these checks, and I am sure your people have said this to you, and the IMB were around and wrote a really nice letter to me after I left the chair to say that none of their members had ever seen any improper action. They are independent eyes and ears. I know they are lay people, but they are independent eyes and ears. They are experienced IMB people, and I have never had any kind of feedback from them that there has been any wrongdoing or that they have seen any improper actions, and I really value other eyes and ears that don't represent the Home Office or G4S that come and give us a really honest, unadulterated view. There were no indications of that from all the conversations. I worked really hard to make sure that the IMB felt welcomed and not as a spying type, do-gooders, because they performed a very important role.

614. The Home Office inspectorate, there are all sorts of other ways in which we can find out. I find it difficult that we weren't able to identify what was going on before it happened.

615. Q. Thank you, Ben.

616. **Mr Marsden:** Ben, this will be typed up professionally and sent to you, and when you get it, if you want to make amendments, please do. If you want to add anything, please do. It is not in Sanskrit, and if there is anything, as I said earlier, that you want to sign a line and say not for repetition, please do.

617. A. Okay.

618. Q. Our timescale is that we think that we will be delivering something to G4S in August. Clearly, what they then do with the report is for them to decide. Serco published the Yarl's Wood report. We know there's a lot of interest in the subject because there have been parliamentary questions just recently about this review and the Stephen Shaw review, and so I think it is wise to imagine that it might be published. I think we anticipate we will be called to the Select Committee, and we have seen Yvette Cooper once already. That is just so you know. We will let you know once we know more, if that would be helpful.

619. A. Yes, please.

[Interview concluded]