

ISLINGTON COUNCIL

Social Services

Paul Curran - Chief Social Services Officer

Detective Superintendent Sue Akers
Metropolitan Police Service
NW Crime OCU
Becke House
Peel Centre
Hendon
London NW6

5 Highbury Crescent, London, N5 1RN

Tel: [REDACTED] Ext: [REDACTED]
Direct Line [REDACTED]
Fax: 0171477 [REDACTED]

This matter is being dealt with by:

Paul Curran

PC/dd/lett696

Your ref:

Date:

29th September 1999

Dear Sue,

Re: Historical Enquiries - LB.I. Children's Homes

Thank you for meeting with myself and colleagues recently to discuss whether or not there should be a wider enquiry into allegations made at former LSI children's homes. I am now writing as agreed formally to request that the Metropolitan Police Service review the information known and recorded to date in the White Report and elsewhere, and reach a decision as to whether there are now grounds for criminal investigations.

In the event of seeking to undertake such investigations, I can confirm that this Council will do whatever it can to assist the police. If such assistance is required whilst you review the information currently held, please do not hesitate to contact this department's Child Protection Manager [REDACTED]. Regardless of the police view of historical allegations at this juncture, I would also reiterate this Council's commitment to co-operation with the police in the event of other historical allegations coming to light in future.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Paul Curran
Chief Social Services Officer

cc: [REDACTED] Islington Police Child Protection Team
Assistant Chief Social Services Officer (Ch&F)
Manager - Child Protection & Reviews

FILE

1AD 115

Your reference: White Report

Our reference: SA/OS

Date: 11th November 1999



METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE

2 Area Headquarters,
Islington Child Protection Team

Islington Police Station
2 Tolpuddle Street
ISLINGTON
N1 0YY

Telephone: [redacted]
Facsimile: [redacted]

[redacted]

Islington Social Services
Highbury House
5 Highbury Crescent
London N5 1RN

Dear [redacted],

Re: Historical allegations of abuse in Islington Children's Homes

Further to our discussions about the above, and issues raised as a consequence of the White Report, I have given the matter careful, objective consideration. Police records have been searched as far as possible on the information contained in the report and existing files examined. In considering all of the information available at this time I have to conclude that there is insufficient tangible evidence on which to base an holistic enquiry on the scale that would be necessary in the circumstances.

Whilst accepting that much of the factual and anecdotal matter contained in the report has not been fully tested, any investigation would, of necessity, involve tactics that have recently failed to produce a satisfactory judicial outcome. (I refer to the Gisburn House enquiry, where methods used to obtain evidence, allied to the historical nature of the complaints, were deemed an abuse of process). There are marked similarities between the nature of the Gisburn House situation and other potential sites of enquiry that, on balance, tend to indicate poor odds of success in the courts, assuming there is sufficient relevant evidence in the first instance.

In light of the foregoing it is my considered view that to 'trawl' for evidence of offences that may have occurred in a historical context would be counter productive. Police will, of course, continue to investigate any allegations volunteered by individuals who are victims of child abuse, whether historical or contemporary in nature. In reaching this decision I have considered the position of Islington Social Services, the wider public interest, and the likely effect on potential victims of abuse. I would like to think that police have adopted a sustainable pragmatic approach to this matter and it is my hope that you are in agreement with this decision. If you have views to the contrary, or would like to discuss the implications further, please let me know and I will be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

Sue Akers
Detective Superintendent

c.c. [redacted]

1A0 4E

METROPOLITAN POLICE SERIOUS CRIME GROUP - S05(3)

ISLINGTON CHILD PROTECTION TEAM

THE ENQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF CHILD CARE IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON - AN INDEPENDENT REPORT WRITTEN BY IAN WHITE CBE MSc AND KATE HART MSc CQSW

Historical Background

In October 1994, Islington Council commissioned a review into allegations of staff misconduct and inappropriate treatment of children and young people in care. The terms of reference for the inquiry, conducted by [REDACTED] was primarily to address allegations made by the London Evening Standard Newspaper in 1992 and 1993. Secondly, the inquiry team was tasked with identifying and listing all allegations of misconduct by staff employed (currently or formerly) by the London Borough of Islington. In essence, the purpose of the inquiry was to collate a dossier of allegations and concerns previously raised, from whatever source, and present a composite report.

The report highlighted the need for a number of procedural and policy changes for the council and drew together up to 13 previous 'mini reports' that attempted to deal with bad practice and misconduct over a period of time. The report was not officially referred to police at the time of publication (May 1995), but has been made available subsequently. A holistic criminal investigation has, therefore, never taken place.

Since publication of the report, Islington CPT has conducted separate investigations into allegations against at least 5 former council employees with regard to serious sexual abuse in care homes [REDACTED]. With the exception of [REDACTED] none of these suspects were identified previously, despite being prolific offenders during the period under review. I suggest this tends to cast serious doubts about the thoroughness of the Council Inquiry.

I understand from sources at Islington Council that a copy of the report was forwarded to the Paedophile Unit at NSY in 1995 for their information only.

The current position

In August 1999, Chief Social Services Officers at Islington, following a review of their files, raised the subject of the White Report. In effect, Council Executives were requesting a police review of the report with the purpose of ascertaining whether there were grounds for a criminal investigation, albeit belatedly. I forwarded their request to Detective Superintendent Sue Akers at NW Crime OCU, who held the CPT portfolio at that time.

D/Supt Akers reviewed the report and was of the opinion that there was insufficient tangible evidence on which to base a full investigation. (Copies of relevant correspondence attached). Police records were checked using the limited information available from the report - much of which was anecdotal or partial, and a decision was taken that a major enquiry was not justifiable. Islington Council accepted this position at the time but continue to express some misgivings.

In my opinion there is a high probability that a properly resourced cold case review would lead to the identification of multiple victims/offenders centred in and around Islington Children's Homes/care facilities during the period 1970 - 1995, and possibly beyond. At the moment there are no related matters currently under investigation by this team following the conviction of [REDACTED] (Gisburn House Enquiry), but the potential for further cases surfacing is all too apparent.

It would appear that S05 have only two options: -

- i) **Accept the decision made in 1999 and hope for the best, or**
- ii) **Conduct a fully scoped major enquiry - using all resources at our disposal.**

I do not believe there is room for half measures or a quick fix to this particular dilemma. Islington Council has effectively left any further decision making to police but have given an undertaking to co-operate in any eventuality.

Submitted for the information.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Islington CPT (S05)
05/04/01

N.B. [REDACTED], Islington [REDACTED], has established that none of the 'suspects' are currently working in positions of trust - to the best of [REDACTED] knowledge. All names have been placed on List 99.

Current Investigations of institutionalised abuse in Islington Children's Homes:

1. GISBURNE HOUSE, WATFORD, HERTS.

Ex-Islington Home where 12 victims have alleged sexual abuse against 3 members of staff between 1972 - 1980.

2. 1 ELWOOD STREET, HIGHBURY, ISLINGTON, NS.

Islington Children's Home. - Historical abuse between 1976 - 1979. Two suspects have fled the country and are currently circulated with [REDACTED]

3. CONEWOOD STREET/ PARK PLACE, NS.

**Islington Children's Home (possible link to [REDACTED]).
Prosecution of one member of staff and unresolved allegations of sexual abuse against other employees.**

[REDACTED]