

147 12

METROPOLITAN POLICE SERIOUS CRIME GROUP - SO5(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 Ian White, 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.

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, N5.

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, N5.

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

Dave Shephard.

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 TAYLOR (Gisburn House Enquiry), but the potential for further cases surfacing is all too apparent.

It would appear that SO5 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]
Detective Inspector
Islington CPT (SO5)
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 his knowledge. All names have been placed on List 99.