

witness to decide whether to enter the programme or not after it has been explained to the witness. Prior approval for inclusion would have been granted by ACC Crime.

19. Witness protection stays totally independent of the investigation. It is our responsibility to try and protect people in whatever capacity to take the threat away from them. Issues such as Andrea McKee's commitment to giving evidence or the authenticity of the letter she was sent would definitely not have been touched on as part of my role. There was no suggestion whatsoever that Andrea McKee would not give evidence unless she was given a house move. One of the things that we do discuss with people is whether they been promised or given any inducements. If they give any indication that they have then we will not consider them for inclusion in the witness protection programme. We are there to maintain the integrity of the investigation, the witness and the witness protection unit.
20. Following our meeting with Andrea McKee we went to Wrexham Police Station where we met DI [REDACTED] and DC Whitehead. We explained to them the purpose of our visit and updated them on the current situation.
21. I have been asked about the time which elapsed between Andrea McKee's receipt of the threatening letter on 23rd December 2003 and my visit to Wales to see her regarding the witness protection programme on 27th January 2004. The first time I became aware of Andrea McKee was on 15th January 2004, and the visit was organised after that meeting. The 27th January 2004 was the first date that those involved could go and see her.
22. I have been shown a letter dated 25th March 2004 at page **59902** which is from DS **H** to the housing association in Wrexham. I have not seen this letter previously. Seeking assistance from a housing association to relocate a witness is an example of the options open to the SIO to protect a witness when entry into the witness protection programme is not viable because of the witness's reluctance to enter the scheme. There were potential welfare and human rights issues which the investigation team had a duty to consider following Andrea McKee's decision not to enter the witness protection programme.
23. On my return to Belfast I submitted my report at page **74242** to Detective Superintendent [REDACTED] on 4th February 2004. In the third paragraph of that report I wrote, "*subsequently I've now been informed by DC **J** that Andrea McKee will not be availing of the witness*