

4. In preparation for committal hearings I often consult with Prosecution witnesses to ascertain whether they will be credible and whether their evidence is likely to be consistent with the statement they previously gave to the police. It is usual for the police to be present during these consultations and afterwards there would be a discussion between the Prosecution and the police about whatever has arisen in the course of the consultation. It is a regular practice in Northern Ireland to hold consultations where we feel it is appropriate.

5. On 21 October 2003, I consulted with Andrea McKee in Wrexham police station. Ivor Morrison and Detective Constable J were also in attendance although Detective Constable J was in and out of the room talking to Wrexham police and so was not present throughout the entire consultation. The purpose of that consultation was for Andrea to relate what would be her evidence in an attempt to see whether it was consistent with her statement of evidence. She did not have the benefit of her statement in front of her while I was talking to her. What she told me was entirely consistent with what was in her written statement. The only document I am aware of which refers to that consultation is the note of Ivor Morrison containing page number 33865. I did not take an independent note of the consultation. Andrea appeared to me to be a plausible witness at that stage because she related effectively what was in her witness statement with little variation. She seemed willing to give evidence for the Prosecution and certainly gave no indication to the contrary.

6. As I understood it, that consultation took place in Wrexham for Andrea's convenience. The committal was listed for 27 October 2003 and it was felt appropriate that I should consult with Andrea prior to then because she had indicated that she would only be available for one day. I did not want to use up time on the morning of the committal consulting with her so we agreed to travel to Wrexham in advance of the hearing. It is not unusual to do a consultation in a police station; the Wrexham police offered their station for use in this instance. From recollection Andrea was attending college which was adjacent to the police