



STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF KEVIN WHITEHEAD

DATED THIS 5th DAY OF September 2008

I, KEVIN WHITEHEAD declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence at the Inquiry I will be liable to prosecution if I have willfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. The Inquiry has disclosed a number of documents to me. Where I make specific reference to a document in my statement I have given the number of the relevant page.
2. In November 2003 I was a Detective Constable in the North Wales Police serving at Wrexham. Copies of my notebook entries [pages 72883 – 72888] have been provided to me by the Inquiry.
3. I had not been aware of the incident involving Robert Hamill in Portadown prior to being contacted by the PSNI in 2003 for assistance with the witness, Andrea McKee. Detective Inspector [REDACTED] was my supervisor at the time and I think he had initially been contacted by the PSNI with a request for assistance in relation to Ms McKee.
4. I was informed of the circumstances surrounding Robert Hamill's death and Ms McKee' involvement in the PSNI's investigations. I understood she was an important witness to proceedings in Northern Ireland. I was led to believe she was in Wales for her own safety but the words 'witness protection' were not actually used. I was also aware she had been convicted of an offence relating to the matter.

5. My instructions were to be a local point of contact in Wrexham for Ms McKee if she needed anything. My job was essentially to stay in contact with her, make sure she was safe and report to the PSNI if any problems arose. I called her daily on the telephone to check on her safety. We also put procedures in place so that if there was a police call to the house, it would be treated as urgent.

6. I recall Ms McKee received a threatening letter at her address in Wrexham. The letter came after our first couple of meetings. In my notebook [Page 72887] for the 23 December 2003 I have recorded "1320 to [address redacted] i/c with DS [redacted] spoke to Andrea McKee. She showed me an open white envelope with hand written address."..... "She told me she believed the letter had arrived that day. She said she had opened it and read its contents and was very concerned as to how her address was known to the sender. I seized the envelope and removed letter and placed in separate clear bags."..... "Miss [McKee] was concerned for her safety and that of her child in relation to further threats."

7. I think I had been informed by the PSNI about the letter rather than Ms McKee. When I had seen her on previous occasions, I felt she was nervous about giving evidence but in control. On the day she received the letter, there was a change in her demeanor. Ms McKee was very concerned about her safety and that of her child. I think her partner was present at the time I saw her.

8. The letter [Page 58443] and envelope were in typescript. I took a photocopy of the letter through the bag. Both were sent to Northern Ireland for forensic examination. We did offer a forensic service in Wales but the letter went to the PSNI.


9. On 21 December 2003, Ms McKee had informed the PSNI that she could not give evidence at the trial in Northern Ireland due to commence on 22 December 2003. I was asked by the PSNI to look in to the genuineness of her reasons for not being able to attend, that is, whether her child was sick. Ms McKee had claimed to have

taken her son to Pendine Park on Friday 19 December 2003 which operated an out-of-hours service for the area. All out-of-hours calls to any GP came through Pendine Park surgery. If it was appropriate, a locum doctor would then be sent out to attend. Normally a record of the person's contact with Pendine surgery would then be sent to the person's GP for the completeness of their records.

10. On 24 December 2003 a statement [Page 34042] was obtained from Dr [REDACTED] at Strathmore Surgery confirming that Andrea McKee's son had been seen at the surgery on 1st and 22nd December 2003. A copy of that statement was faxed to the RUC on 24 December 2003.
11. On 30 December 2003 another statement [Page 59853] was obtained from Dr [REDACTED] in which he confirmed that he had seen Andrea McKee's son at her home on 11 December 2003. I then faxed the statement and a covering note to DI H on 30 December 2003 in the note [Page 34055] I wrote, "*Please find statement from Dr. [REDACTED] – sorry for the delay – but he's not as keen at keeping records as I thought. Re: the statement from Pendine GP office – the afternoon shift will visit when they open at 6pm tonight – and fax any relevant statements to you.*"
12. My comment included in the fax [Page 34055], that Dr [REDACTED] was not as keen at keeping records as I thought, came directly from Dr [REDACTED]'s secretary who I had spoken with. Dr [REDACTED] did not have any record of Ms McKee or her husband bringing in their sick child but he was relying on memory rather than written records.
13. All records from Pendine Park were searched for an attendance by Andrea McKee or her partner with her son from 18 December 2003. No record was found. As I recall, the records consisted of a notepad on which the caller's name, number, address, time, date and the nature of the medical problem were recorded. I did not personally examine any written records and simply relied on the receptionist to check. On 1 January 2004 I faxed a note [Page 34041] to DI H with the result of enquiries at Pendine Park.

14. Following my enquiries with both surgeries I did not go back to Ms McKee and tell her I had not been able to confirm her story. I left it to the RUC to follow it up.
15. My view of the PSNI was that they were there very professional in the dealings concerning Andrea McKee. I was always given very clear instructions. I was never asked by the PSNI to provide a statement about my enquiries with the various surgeries. I do not recall if I was asked for a statement when I seized the threatening letter. I was never informed the prosecution had been dropped but I was aware that the result of my enquiries would cause problems in Northern Ireland.

SIGNED:

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KEVIN WHITEHEAD

DATED:

5/9/08