

Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP

Shadow Home Secretary

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA t **GRO-C** e andy.burnham **GRO-C**

Carol Anne Grayson
Via email

26th November 2015

Dear Carol

Thank you for copying me into your letter to James Meikle.

I thought it might help if I set out my own involvement in this issue.

I arrived in the Department of Health as Secretary of State in June 2009, shortly after the previous ministerial team had formally responded to the Archer Report. In the eyes of the Department, the matter was 'closed'. Any letters sent to me in that period would have been dealt with by civil servants and simply repeated the decision taken in respect of Archer.

However, you are absolutely right to say that I was aware of the on-going anger amongst those affected, including the demonstration outside my office.



Around that time, I was approached by the former MP for Wythenshawe and Sale East, Paul Goggins, to see if I would be prepared to sit down with a group of his constituents to hear first-hand from them about their experience in getting justice from the system.

This meeting took place in January 2010. I have to be honest and say that, until then, I did not have a full understanding of the full extent of suffering and injustice. But that meeting changed my perspective on the issue and, as a result, I went back to the Department of Health and asked them to reopen the issue. At my instruction, the then Public Health Minister, Gillian Merron MP was asked to initiate a review of what more could be done to help. That review eventually reported after the General Election and, as a result, there were some improvements made to the various funds.

However, I would be the first to accept that these changes were modest and did not go anywhere near providing a full answer. That is why, ever since, I have given my support to those campaigning for a full, fair and final settlement. Shortly before he died, Paul Goggins called a debate in Westminster Hall and you will see from the record of that debate that I attended and lent my support from the Frontbench. I have since spoken a number of times in the House on this issue.

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I hope this information is helpful and goes some way to explaining my own involvement and actions.

I remain convinced that this is a major injustice and that those affected deserve nothing less than full truth and justice. I will continue to do whatever I can to help secure that.

Yours faithfully

GRO-C

Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Shadow Home Secretary

cc James Meikle
Colette Wintle
Liz Carroll
Nick Brown MP
Diana Johnson MP