

Witness Name: Anna Turley
Statement No.: WITN4469001
Exhibits: WITN4469002-009
Dated: 14 July 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANNA TURLEY

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 24 June 2020.

I, Ms Anna Turley, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Anna Turley of GRO-C My date of birth is GRO-C 1978. I was the Member of Parliament for Redcar between June 2015 and December 2019. I was Chair of the Co-Operative Party in 2019, Shadow Minister for Civil Society 2015-16, Chair of the All Party Taskforce on Kinship Care, Secretary of the All Party Group on Steel and Metals, and Chair of the All-Party Group on Bingo.
2. I do not, nor ever have had membership of any of the groups or committees relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, although I believe I was on the mailing list to receive news and information from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Haemophilia and Contaminated Blood.
3. I fully support the Infected Blood Inquiry and believe it to have been long overdue. I followed the case throughout my time in parliament and was fully supportive of the campaign to get the government to hold this review, including signing up for news and information from the relevant APPG. I was saddened to receive the witness statement of my former constituents as I had sought to support them with this campaign as their MP. I completely sympathise with their anger and frustration at the injustice they have

experienced, but I dispute their recollection of their engagement with me and am disappointed to see their comments. Frustratingly, I am limited in what evidence I can provide, as after losing my position as an MP all files including diaries and emails are destroyed due to GDPR (unless requested to be returned to constituents, all of whom were contacted with this option after the election), so I am having to rely to the best of my ability on my memory, and on searching personal emails for this statement. I have also spoken to all six former members of staff who might have had any contact with this case and my statement reflects their recollections to me, to the best of their abilities.

Section 2: Responses to criticism of W0087

4. Regarding paragraph 58 of witness W0087 statement, I am afraid I do not accept these statements. I recall that in early 2018 my constituency office manager told me that the witness had come to the Redcar office to request personal paperwork that he said he had left with us, but that the team did not know what he was referring to. Concerned by this I asked both the constituency and Westminster office teams to undertake a full search for any documents. They could not find any large bundles of personal notes or lever arch files of the nature that he described. We had an electronic file for him on our casework database and a paper file from before we had had started using the electronic system (August 2015). My constituency staff printed off what information they did have on the electronic file for the him (including letters we had sent him, and copies of correspondence with ministers) and put these together with the notes and other papers such as press cuttings that were in the paper file that we had started from our first meeting in May or June 2015 before we had the electronic system. My team also undertook further research with the House of Commons library for the constituent and included this in the file. They gave all these documents to the constituent who signed for them.
5. We were confused and concerned by the witnesses' accusations, and apologised in case there had been an error, even though we did not have any record or recollection of the paperwork he was referring to.
6. For clarification, our office process was that from August 2015 we used an electronic case-work system which had a file for each constituent that contacted us, so any relevant paperwork received from constituents was scanned and added to the system and then immediately returned to constituents. We would **never** retain original personal

documents belonging to constituents. We would certainly never have accepted a Lever Arch file of notes. We did not have storage for these kinds of large files for casework and would not have taken papers on this scale from a constituent, particularly of a sensitive and medical nature. Prior to the electronic system, we had a paper file system for copies of correspondence and had established a file for this constituent from my first meeting with him.

7. I recall first meeting the constituent as it was one of my earliest meetings after opening my office. I was accompanied by an experienced and diligent PA. I remember the meeting because it was the first time I had heard of the contaminated blood issue and thought it sounded very serious and I know I pledged to follow the issue closely in parliament. I do not recall receiving any paperwork at that meeting and nor does the PA who accompanied me, but we established a paper folder for him as we did for every new case we took on. I don't recall any further meetings between myself and the witness, although I know he came into the office occasionally and we also helped him with another casework issue regarding rodents.
8. Regarding paragraph 59 of witness W0087 statement, I do not know which occasion the witness is referring to as there were numerous debates on this issue during my time in parliament. I raised the constituent's case in a debate on Contaminated Blood on 12 April 2016, and attended a debate on this issue on 25 April 2017 but did not get to speak. If a previous debate in another room or an event runs over and an MP misses the start of a debate, it is not possible to speak in a debate, as protocol demands you are there from the start and you won't get called by the Speaker or Chair, so it is quite possible that I was unable to speak in a debate due to running late with other parliamentary business, or I may have had a diary clash and been unable to attend a debate at all. It is impossible to tell without knowing which debate the constituent is referring to or having access to my diary.
9. It is simply not feasible that the constituent would have been told 'a junior clerk in the House of Commons has accidentally shredded them'. There is absolutely no way my parliamentary staff would have shredded such paperwork without direct instruction from me and I would never have given any such instruction for the shredding of personal notes of a constituent, but returned them to them. We did not keep any constituency casework in Westminster – this was always handled by the Redcar office. They also would not have been given to a parliamentary clerk as they would have no reason to have any such paperwork from me.

Section 3: Other Issues

10. I'm afraid I disagree with the witness's statement. I did my best within a busy constituency office and during an extremely busy time in parliament to support the constituent in their case. I raised the constituent's case on the floor of the House and corresponded regularly with him, keeping him updated on a campaign that I fully supported. On searching my personal email, which I used from my mobile phone if I was working 'on the go' rather than at a computer on the parliamentary estate, I have found the following emails in relation to this case which show that I took a supportive interest in both his case and the campaign. Unfortunately, all other related correspondence will have been done formally through my parliamentary email and would therefore have been deleted along with the account after I lost my seat, unless correspondence was returned to the constituent on request. These exhibits are simply the informal exchanges with my team and a tweet and are all I now have access to, to demonstrate my support.

- a) 12 April 2016 – There is an Urgent Question on contaminated Blood and I ask my parliamentary researcher to send through any info on the constituent's case so I can raise it. (WITN4469002). I intervened in a debate to raise the constituent's specific case, based on notes of their letter to Minister Alastair Burt, and after my caseworker confirmed they were content for me to raise their case (WITN4469003). I tweeted afterwards to further highlight the campaign (WITN4469004).
- b) 25 April 2017 – I attended a debate on contaminated blood and asked my team to contact the constituent to let him know about the debate and provide a link to Hansard and Parliament TV (WITN4469005).
- c) 2 October 2017 – I asked my team to share a Guardian article with the constituents on the High Court Action (WITN4469006).
- d) 7 November 2017 – I signed the APPG on Contaminated Blood letter from Diana Johnson MP to Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Health and asked my team to share with the constituent (WITN4469007-008).

e) 23 July 2019 – signed the APPG on Contaminated Blood letter from Diana Johnson to Amber Rudd MP and asked my team to share with the constituent (WITN4469009).

11. At all times I sought to support my constituent and to keep him informed. I dispute the disappointing accusations in his statement. I always believed this to be an important issue and supported the Infected Blood Inquiry campaign.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed GRO-C

Dated 14 July 2020

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number
12 April 2016	Email exchange with my team regarding Contaminated Blood debate.	WITN4469002
12 April 2016	Hansard Extract of my intervention on behalf of the constituent	WITN4469003
12 April 2016	Tweet regarding the debate	WITN4469004
25 April 2017	Email to my team after another debate	WITN4469005
2 October 2017	Email asking my team to send a newspaper article to the constituent	WITN4469006
7 November 2018	Email agreeing to sign letter to Health Secretary in support of the campaign	WITN4469007
26 November 2018	Email asking the team to share the signed letter with constituents	WITN4469008
23 July 2019	Email asking my team to sign the APPG letter on this issue to Amber	WITN4469009

	Rudd and share with constituents	
--	----------------------------------	--