

Witness Name: Dame Vera Baird

Statement No.: WITN4468001

Exhibits: N/A

Dated: 16/07/2020

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### WRITTEN STATEMENT OF VERA BAIRD

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 11 July 2020.

I, Dame Vera Baird, will say as follows: -

#### Section 1: Introduction

1. I am Dame Vera Baird and my address is: GRO-C  
GRO-C My date of birth is GRO-C 1950. I have an LLB and an MA in Literature and Modern History. I am also a QC.
2. I was elected the Member of Parliament for Redcar in the General Election in 2001 and held the seat until the General Election of 2010. In 2005-06 I was Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to the Home Secretary. A PPS is appointed by the Prime Minister to assist Ministers with ad-hoc duties. They have no executive or operational responsibility or authority. In 2006-07, I was the Parliamentary Under Secretary in the Department of Constitutional Affairs with responsibility for legal aid, general criminal justice issues and the National Archives. In 2007-10 I was Solicitor General. This role oversees the work of the Law Officers Departments and undertakes specific legal functions in the public interest.
3. In 2012 I was elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Northumbria and held that position until I stepped down in 2019. The role of a PCC is to be the voice of the people in policing, hold the Chief Constable to account and ensure the delivery of an effective and efficient police service within their force area.
4. In 2019 I was appointed Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales. In this role I am required to promote the interests of victims and witnesses and encouraging good practice in their treatment and keep under review the operation of the Victims Code of Practice.

5. Other than being a Government Minister in the period 2005-10, I have not been a member, past or present, of any committees or groups relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

### **Section 2: Responses to criticism of W0087**

6. I was the MP for redcar for nine years. I have no recollection of anyone raising with me issues relating to contaminated blood. I am certain that I would not say what is described to any human being.
7. It is not clear from the Witness Statement of Witness W0087 when or where it is alleged that I made the comment in question. I have consulted my former caseworker, who attended every Surgery with me and dealt with every case. She has no recollection of the alleged comment and is equally certain that I did not and would not speak in that way to anyone.

### **Section 3: Other Issues**

8. There are no other issues in relation to which I consider that I have evidence which will be relevant to the Inquiry's investigation of the matters set out in its Terms of Reference.

### **Statement of Truth**

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

GRO-C

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_16/07/2020\_\_\_\_\_