

Witness Name: Peter Stevens

Statement No: WITN3070005

Exhibits: None

Dated: 8 March 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PETER STEVENS IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM BY GRO-B

I, Peter Stevens, will say as follows: -

I provide this statement in response to the Inquiry's letter dated 3 March 2021 notifying me of criticism made against me by GRO-B in his statement to the Inquiry dated 4 February 2021.

Response to paragraph 73 of Mr GRO-B's statement

The main thrust of the critical comments in paragraph 73 refers to events recounted in greater detail in paragraph 23 concerning the cessation of a self-improvement grant of £200/month paid to GRO-B by MFT to enable him to co-ordinate events. He says that "in about 2009/10" I announced my forthcoming retirement as MFT Chair and the grant was stopped following that. He also says, in paragraph 76, that I invited him to run residential events for the Bereavement Group.

As the inquiry knows from my own witness statement, I actually retired from the MFT Board at the end of 2006, so the stopping of GRO-B's grant was not made with my involvement, unless the MFT Board minutes show that I was invited to give some views during the Board's discussion; I have no recollection of this but am prepared to accept that GRO-B might have a better memory. But, even if I were present, I would not, of course, have been able to participate in the Board's decision.

GRO-B was invited to run some weekend events for Eileen Trust during my lengthy spell as Chairman thereof. The first of these, I believe in Nottingham, was held in the financial year

ending 3 March 2007, the Eileen Trust Annual Report for that year (EILN0000017_007) noting a cost for the event of some £8,800. A reference in the minutes of a 1 December 2006 Board meeting (EILN0000003_136) suggests that **GRO-B** was asked to run this event. There was another event the following year (ending 31 March 2008) with a cost reported of about £1,800. but there is no mention of **GRO-B**'s involvement; this event is recorded in the Annual Report for that year (EILN0000016_038).

No events were recorded in the Annual Reports for the following two years (ending respectively 31 March 2009 and 2010), although a) there is a Board minute from 17 October 2007 (EILN0000003_054) that **GRO-B** would be asked for suggestions for an event costing £5,000; b) a Board minute of 13 February 2008 (EILN0000001_078) notes agreement that an event would not be appropriate that year for "cost and other reasons"; and c) a Board minute of 5 May 2010 (EILN0000012_014) notes that the "Event Coordinator would be finalising the event and draft programme shortly". (There is no record in subsequent minutes that this happened).

A Board minute of 27 October 2010 (EILN0000012_008) notes that there had been an event earlier that year, in Leeds, which was "greatly appreciated" and that there should be another one in late 2011 or early 2012, run by Susan Daniels. The Leeds event might be that recorded in the Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2011 (EILN0000016_035) having cost about £9,700.

A Board minute of 22 March 2011 (EILN0000003_003) notes the agreement that there would be a weekend event in October that year, on the South Coast, run by Susan Daniels; a subsequent Board minute (EILN0000002_050) records the Board meeting on the occasion of that event, in Bournemouth, on 15 October 2011, and records the general satisfaction of those attending. This must be the event reported in the Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2012 (EILN0000016_034), shown to have cost about £7,900).

Thereafter I recall such weekend events occurred annually, all arranged by Susan, in locations such as Liverpool, Edinburgh, Bath and Exeter.

I cannot recall whether **GRO-B** managed the 2007/8 event, but am sure he had no involvement in any arrangements thereafter, notwithstanding the minute in EILN0000012_014. There is nothing in the ET Board minutes to explain this.

I cannot recall asking **GRO-B** to run residential events for the Bereavement Group. He does not say when this occurred.

These Board minutes appear to support **GRO-B**'s contention that from 2009/10 his grant for event co-ordination ceased (which presumably means that he could no longer undertake that activity) but not that I was in any way involved in its cessation. I certainly have no memory of such involvement or of the reasons for the MFT Trustees of the time, including their new

Chairman, Christopher Fitzgerald, withdrawing the grant.

GRO-B goes on to say, in paragraph 23, that he and I parted "on bad terms", and, in paragraph 73, that we "fell out" over his grant. I have no recollection of this and, because I could not have participated in the decision to stop the grant, do not know why he should make these statements. I must point out that, following my resignation from the MFT Board in 2006, I was in the Alliance House office probably every week (on Skipton business), so had GRO-B been there (which might have been possible had he still had the event co-ordination grant, as he claims), we would have met. But I agree with his statement in paragraph 23 (but not with the implied date) that he and I have not spoken since (which saddens me: GRO-B was a friend, who on one occasion (I cannot recall when) joined me at my two debenture seats at Twickenham for a rugby international. I hope his apparent ill-feeling towards me does not stem from the fact that this only happened once – I had no shortage of possible company at those seats and family tended to take priority).

GRO-B's other critical comment, in paragraph 73, relating to comments revealed in Emails stolen from MFT's system, has already been fully covered in my statements to the inquiry. I can only add that I do not recall whether GRO-B was present when Martin Harvey, Gordon Clark and I went to Cardiff and apologised to those about whom the disgraceful words were written; I do not believe that GRO-B was one of those so targeted.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true based on my recollections and the documents provided to me by the Inquiry.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 8 March 2021