

Witness Name: Jan Barlow  
Statement No: WITN3108013  
Exhibits: None  
Dated: 28 February 2021

## **INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

---

### **WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JAN BARLOW IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM BY ALAN BURGESS**

---

I, Jan Barlow, will say as follows: -

I provide this statement in response to the Inquiry's letter dated 25 February 2021 notifying me of criticism made against me by Alan Burgess in his statement to the Inquiry dated 22 February 2021.

#### **Paragraph 34 and Paragraph 68 of Mr Burgess' statement**

As discussed in paragraphs 22-22(c) of my statement of 22 December 2020, a restructuring of the support team across the Caxton Foundation (CF) and MFT was undertaken in 2013 because since CF had become operational, there had been no review of the staffing in the team which supported beneficiaries across the two organisations. As previously stated, a more senior Director of Operations role was created to replace the Support Services Manager role, as the organisations required someone who could deliver a greater focus on, and improvements to, customer care (such as grant turnaround times) and who had greater awareness of the changes in external policy which would impact upon beneficiaries (such as changes to welfare benefits) and could ensure the organisations were aware of, and able to respond to, these. I refute the allegation that the Support Services Manager, Roz Riley, was bullied in any way. The restructuring was carried out following best practice in HR. A 30 day consultation period was held (which was more than was required by law), and meetings with all staff affected were held; these meetings were also attended by an external HR consultant, and minutes of the meetings were taken and shared with the individual staff member concerned. As stated previously, as I recall there was an increase in costs in appointing a Director of Operations compared with the former Support Services Manager role. As I recall,

the increase wasn't significant, and the boards considered this an important investment to improve the standards of service delivery.

In relation to paragraph 68 of Mr Burgess' statement, where he says, "what I objected to was the number of staff", as set out in previous statements, DHSC placed a cap (of 12, as I recall) on the total number of staff for the Alliance House Organisations (AHOs). During my tenure at CF and MFT, there were ten staff members, two of whom did not work full time. This equated to approximately nine whole time equivalents working across the five organisations which together distributed approximately £52 million of government funds during their last full year of operation prior to the transfer to NHSBSA. As I recall, for MFT there were approximately three whole time equivalent staff and, as stated at paragraph 69 of my witness statement dated 22 December 2020, given the small staff team there was limited scope for reducing costs further.

#### **Paragraph 46 of Mr Burgess' statement**

Contrary to Mr Burgess' allegation that MFT did not act to assist beneficiaries experiencing problems with their benefits, as discussed at paragraphs 51-51(c) of my statement dated 22 December 2020, MFT worked with an independent benefits adviser, Neil Bateman, to whom beneficiaries were referred (with their consent) if they were experiencing problems with their benefits. As I recall, Mr Bateman had great success in resolving issues beneficiaries experienced with DWP, including having beneficiaries' state benefits both reinstated and sometimes backdated. During my tenure, unless beneficiaries already had a case in progress, they accessed the services of the benefits adviser through MFT; they were never "left to contact Neil Bateman of their own initiative" as Mr Burgess alleges.

#### **Paragraphs 99, 126 and 132 of Mr Burgess' statement**

The Charity Commission requires that charity trustees do not gain any personal benefit by virtue of their role as a charity trustee, and avoiding conflicts of interest is an important governance issue. With regard to the Grants Committee, when this was established as the successor committee to the National Support Services Committee, the membership rules for the Committee were reviewed to ensure that no conflict of interest could arise. As I recall, this was discussed by the full board and it was agreed that whilst serving as a user trustee on the Grants Committee, the user trustee should not be able to apply for a grant through that Committee. This was to protect both the user trustee themselves and MFT from any accusations that trustees were exploiting their position on the Committee for personal gain. At paragraph 132 Mr Burgess claims that "it was ensured ..... that neither I nor many other

user trustees, could be involved by the addition of the rules [that whilst serving as a user trustee on the Grants Committee, that user trustee should not be able to apply for a grant through that Committee]. This is not correct, as a user trustee joined the Grants Committee when it was formed and remained on the Committee until MFT ceased to be operational.

**Paragraph 168 of Mr Burgess' statement**

As set out at paragraph 176 of my statement of 22 December 2020, as I recall, the MFT online bulletin board was an online chat forum for beneficiaries which had been set up before I joined the organisation and which had always been moderated by a beneficiary. As I recall, MFT decided to close down the bulletin board because it became a forum where beneficiaries were hostile to each other, and MFT was concerned about the legal implications of hosting such a forum that was essentially outside of its control. The beneficiaries subsequently set up and moderated their own forum, and MFT supported this by confirming that individuals who wished to become members of that forum were MFT beneficiaries and therefore eligible to join it.

**Paragraph 196 of Mr Burgess' statement**

With regard to the false allegations made about myself and Roger Evans by Liz Carroll, the then CEO of the Haemophilia Society, this has been covered in my previous statements (see paragraphs E(i)-(iii) of my statement dated 24 January 2020 and paragraph 186 of my statement dated 22 December 2020). I refute Mr Burgess' allegation that Ms Carroll and the Haemophilia Society were "bullied into submission". As I recall, once the fact that these allegations had been made were brought to our attention, Roger Evans attempted to resolve the matter informally with both Ms Carroll and the then Chair of the Haemophilia Society, Bernard Manson. When the attempt to resolve the matter informally was not successful, the board of MFT agreed that legal advice should be sought. Contrary to Mr Burgess' belief that he "would be surprised if they [ie two members of MFT's board who were Haemophilia Society appointees] agreed", as I recall, the entire board supported this course of action.

**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



Dated 28 February 2021