

Witness Name: ROGER EVANS
Statement No: WITN3859004
Exhibits: None
Dated: 3 March 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FOURTH WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ROGER EVANS IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM BY W1791

I, ROGER EVANS, will say as follows: -

I provide this statement in response to the Inquiry's letter dated 23 February 2021 notifying me of criticism made against me by W1791 in his statement (WITN1791011) to the Inquiry dated 27 June 2020.

Response to paragraph 44 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

1. I do not recall making this comment, but I may have done so. It would have been my opinion and I would have been firm in responding. If Rt Hon Mr Alistair Burt MP had been invited to the meeting, then all other beneficiaries' MP's would have to be invited. That was the purpose of the APPG, not the Partnership Group ('PG').
2. MPs had the opportunity to meet with beneficiaries, the CEO and myself at APPG meetings. Subsequently, Jan Barlow and I met with Mr Burt in the Commons, at his invitation, when we briefed him and exchanged views.

Response to paragraph 51 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

3. I do not recall this specific event.

Response to paragraph 54 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

4. I have no further comment with respect to the allegations. I refer to this in paragraphs 45 and 314 of my Statement of 4 February 2021.

Response to paragraph 56 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

5. I recall the MFT board conducted a review of communications. A survey was undertaken by Kate Evans, a board member, which was useful. The reason for the review was discontent by some beneficiaries, and the Board, on the quality of communication between the MFT and beneficiaries. Contemporary forms of communication were not being used. Given the reason for the review, it was expected that there would be negative comments on the past. I do not recall the responses being scathing, but I would expect there were some critical responses from a few beneficiaries. There were also helpful suggestions on the way forward, at least some of which we were able to implement. My recollection is that the conduct, and undertaking, of the survey, together with the results, were shared with the PG. It would have been pointless, and illogical, not to have done so.

Response to paragraph 58 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

6. At one PG meeting, the beneficiaries would not approve the minutes, and they were left "on the table". See paragraph 314 of my Statement of 4 February 2021. The Chair gave me the opportunity to redact information by me and comments from the draft minutes, if they broke confidences. When I was appointed as Chairman, I informed the PG that I would be very open in giving them information but, in that spirit, there may be information which should be redacted for reasons of confidentiality. This was the case regarding the above meeting I know two or three beneficiaries were unhappy about this, and the PG Chair found it impossible to get agreement on sets of minutes. His reason to me was the inappropriate approach adopted by those few beneficiaries, one of whom was W1791, not my wanting redactions.

Response to paragraph 63 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

7. It was reasonable, and proper, for Jan Barlow, as CEO to be communicated with and for her to deal with day to day operational matters. I do not recall ever being told that beneficiaries "were too scared to speak out".

Response to paragraph 69 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

8. I have no further comment to this, other than that in my response to paragraph 58 of W1791's statement above.

Response to paragraph 89 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

9. I would not have said I "wasn't willing to go after the money myself". I most probably was making the point that it was not for MFT to campaign for increases in funding. The Haemophilia Society was the organisation most appropriately placed to do any campaigning that was needed. I have referred to this previously.

Response to paragraph 106 of W1791's statement at WITN1791011

10. I do not recall the details of this meeting. I would have no reason either for "sugar coating" issues, nor for undoing the hard work put in by Mr Burt. I had no motivation for doing so but, even if I did, it would have been churlish, and naive to behave in such a way with experienced MPs. My recollection of APPG meetings generally, is that MPs who chose to attend APPG meetings questioned Jan Barlow and myself very rigorously, and were very supportive and acting as advocates for beneficiaries.

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 3rd March 2021