

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANNE MILTON

Witness Name: Anne Milton

Statement No.: WITN6437001

Exhibits: [DHSC0041266_185]

Dated: 28/01/2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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I provide this Statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules, dated 28 June 2021.

I, ANNE MILTON, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Political Career

- 1.1. I was elected as the MP for Guildford in 2005 and served on the Health Select Committee until December 2006. I was the Shadow Minister for Tourism from November 2006 and the Shadow Minister for Health from July 2007. I was re-elected in the 2010 election and served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department of Health until September 2012 when I was appointed a Government Whip, Vice-Chamberlain of the Household and then Treasurer of the Household (these are all promotions within the Whips' Office). In March 2015, I was appointed to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom. In 2017 I was re-elected to Parliament. Between June 2017 and July 2019, I was the Minister of State for Skills and Apprenticeships, and was Minister for Women from 2017 to 2018. In July 2019, I resigned as Minister of State for Skills and Apprenticeships. I stood as an independent politician in the 2019 election but was not re-elected.
- 1.2. At the time of the event that I cover in this statement (2010), I was Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department of Health.

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Section 2: Response to criticism by W2050: November 2010 Meeting

- 2.1. I have been asked about a meeting that took place in November 2010. I believe that this was an open meeting that I arranged in Westminster Hall and understand that it was held between 10am and 12.30pm on Thursday 11 November 2010 in the Grand Committee Room. It was a meeting for MPs and I believe for Peers, in order to give Parliamentarians an opportunity to raise issues personally on behalf of their constituents.
- 2.2. I had received many individual written representations from MPs concerning their constituents who had received contaminated blood. I therefore arranged this meeting as I wanted to give MPs an opportunity to meet me, and invite their constituents if they so wished. This gave me the opportunity to hear the stories from those affected by contaminated blood in person. It was also an important opportunity for some of my officials to also hear the very distressing accounts of what impact this had on people's lives.
- 2.3. From memory I believe that before the meeting, I asked MPs to suggest how they felt that those affected by contaminated blood products could be best supported.
- 2.4. At the meeting, I would have asked people to write down their stories because I felt it was important for those less able to articulate some of the problems they have faced to also have their story heard. I know that some people find it difficult speaking in front of others and I did not want anyone who felt nervous to feel that they could not tell their story.
- 2.5. It is perhaps important to understand that this was not a session with me on a stage and then a Q&A. Instead, it was an open meeting at which I, along with some of my officials, tried to get around and speak to everyone who was present. The aim was to listen to what was being said rather than for me to speak or answer questions.
- 2.6. I understand that in his witness statement, Witness W2050 states at paragraph 139 on page 38 that *"I took the opportunity to speak with Ann Milton and asked her why we had not been informed prior to the meeting that we wouldn't be*

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allowed to ask questions... Ann Milton's reply was Your MP should have informed you. My MP, Diana Johnson, was stood to the right hand side of Ann Milton... Diana said "Wait a minute - you never gave me any information to pass to my constituent". I honestly do not recall Diana Johnson MP saying this or anything of this nature.

- 2.7. The meeting was an honest attempt to try to make sure people got their stories heard. I know from the conversations I had that day and afterwards that people in the meeting felt it was a really valuable opportunity to talk about their experiences. I remember people appreciating the chance to come and speak to us and I was personally touched by their stories, many of which I remember to this day.
- 2.8. I understand that a letter was sent after the meeting and received by the Department [DHSC0041266_185]. I also understand that the couple who wrote the letter and had been present at the meeting wrote personally thanking me for arranging the meeting and adding to what had been said at the meeting about their personal situation by sending me sections of their evidence from the Archer Inquiry. I feel that this demonstrates that – at least to some present in the meeting – it was clear that I wanted to hear from those affected and I did all I could to convey that message. I was so sorry to hear that one witness got the impression from this meeting that I *'wasn't interested in engaging with us properly'* when my intention was very much the opposite. I was acutely aware that there was nothing that I could do that would make up for what had happened to those affected by receiving contaminated blood, but it was a sincere attempt to try make sure that they felt I would try to be a voice for them within the Department of Health and attempt to bring them some sort of closure.
- 2.9. I was deeply affected by the experiences of those who had received contaminated blood and the devastating impact this had on their lives. I will never forget their stories and it remains one of the most tragic and devastating events that I heard, whilst an MP and a Minister. I believe that feeling was shared by many of those I worked with.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed... **GRO-C**

Dated... 28th January 2002

Table of exhibits:

Date	Notes/ Description	Exhibit number
13.11.2010	Letter to Anne Milton from GRO-A GRO-A	DHSC0041266_185