

Witness Name: Andrew Goodall

Statement No.: WITN7350001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 25/10/2022

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANDREW GOODALL

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 07 October 2022.

I was assisted in the preparation of this statement by David Richards, Director of Propriety and Ethics at the Welsh Government.

I, Andrew Goodall, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Dr Andrew Goodall, Permanent Secretary for Wales. My date of birth is GRO-C 1969. My work address is Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 2NQ. I have a Law degree from Essex University and a PhD in Health Service Management from Cardiff Business School.
2. As Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Government I am head of policy, chief advisor to First Minister of Wales and I am in charge of the running of the organisation. I took up the role in November 2021.

3. I was previously, between June 2014 and October 2021, the NHS Wales Chief Executive/ Director General for Health and Social Services. I have been an NHS Manager in Wales since July 1991, but had no roles directly linked to the infected blood area. I have been at Chief Executive level in different roles since 2005.
4. I have not provided evidence to, or been involved in any other inquiries, investigations or criminal or civil litigation in relation to human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and/or hepatitis B virus ("HBV") and/or hepatitis C virus ("HCV") infections and/or variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease ("vCJD") in blood and/or blood products.

Section 2: Candour and Objectivity

5. *What measures and incentives support candour in the civil service and what more could or should be done?*
 - 5.1. I take very seriously the responsibility upon the Welsh Government civil service to be honest, open and candid. As noted above, before joining the Welsh Government my career was in health service management. Throughout that time, and in particular in my role as Chief Executive of a Health Board, I was rigorous in ensuring that the duty of candour placed upon the NHS was discharged properly. I have brought that experience into my current and previous roles in the Welsh Government.
 - 5.2. In the Welsh Government civil service, we regard "candour" as being covered by the value of "honesty" in the Civil Service Code, supplemented by the Nolan Principles of "openness" and "accountability". We ensure that all members of staff receive a copy of the Civil Service Code when they join us. The induction process which all new staff go through includes training on what it means in practice to adhere to the Code and standards to which all civil servants are expected to live up to, including the Nolan Principles. Refresher training is delivered throughout the year on governance and ethics, which

includes all the elements of the Civil Service Code and the Nolan Principles as part of that process.

- 5.3. I expect all of my senior team and myself not just to regularly talk about the importance of behaving in accordance with the Code, but to ensure that we are scrupulous in complying with it ourselves. We try to make it easy for staff to feel that there are people in the organisation to whom they can go to seek advice and support when they are uncertain about how to apply the Code, and we have a process in place for staff to raise concerns if they see any behaviour which they think may not be in accordance with those values. Finally, we take appropriate action when we discover instances of non-compliance.
- 5.4. Corporately, we have a complaints policy on our website which enables people to raise a complaint with us if they think that they have suffered maladministration or not received the service to which they should be entitled. We have a process for dealing with such complaints, which is led and co-ordinated by our Complaints Unit. The staff of the Complaints Unit are trained and experienced in this area and one of their responsibilities is to ensure that complaints are dealt with promptly, sympathetically and in accordance with our procedure. Our published complaints policy says that if we find that we have made a mistake or got something wrong then we will explain to the complainant how and why it happened; if we find there is a fault in our systems then we will explain how we plan to make changes to help prevent a recurrence; that we will aim to rectify matters in respect of that particular complaint; and that “if we have got it wrong, we will always apologise”.
- 5.5. I think that there are two areas in which the civil service, including the Welsh Government, can do more to promote candour. The first is in policy formulation and the defence of the Government where we can do more to encourage policy makers and advisors to be more open to advising ministers to acknowledge when a policy has been less successful than it might have been, rather than to always put up the best

defence that can be made. I know that ministers are conscious of their responsibilities in this area but I think that the civil service can do more to assist them in the way that advice and briefing is prepared for them. We have to recognise, as I note has already been put to the Inquiry in evidence, that the cut and thrust of political debate and media scrutiny sometimes makes this approach difficult and it would be helpful if a wider consensus about the terms of public and political policy debate could be reached.

5.6. The second area is that where the civil service itself is directly providing services, either to the public or to intermediate bodies. I think that there is still an intrinsic reluctance in some parts of the civil service to admit that a mistake has been made and to apologise. To my mind, the origin of this reluctance is not indifference or heartlessness, but a worry that acknowledging a mistake will lead to a reputational hit to the organisation or to the person concerned “getting into trouble”. I think that this is a subset of the perceived blame culture to which all major organisations are prone, to some extent, and which can never be completely eradicated. I believe that it is vital that the leaders in the civil service assure their staff regularly that we should acknowledge when things have not been done well, make sure that we learn from the experience, and that there will be no retribution for honesty where people have done their best and acted in good faith.

6. *What mitigates against groupthink in the civil service and what more could or should be done?*

6.1. I believe that the best antidote to groupthink is being open to a range of views and perspectives from the outset when policy is being made. In Wales it has been the approach of successive governments to promote partnership working and the involvement of citizens and service users in decision-making from the outset and this was enshrined in legislation through the Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015.

6.2. The Act places a duty upon the Welsh Government and other specified public bodies to undertake their responsibilities in accordance with the sustainable development principle, which means that the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The duties are to be carried out in accordance with the five ways of working specified in the Act, two of which are “collaboration” and “involvement”. In other words, as well as it being our intention, the Welsh Government actually has a statutory duty to involve stakeholders and partners in the development of its policy and I think that this approach, apart from its other advantages, guards against the risk of insulated thinking where there is insufficient challenge.

7. *What helps the civil service guard against approaching issues with a closed mind, or what Jeremy Hunt described as ‘memory illusion’ and the ‘institutional closing of ranks’, to protect those people who were judged to have been trying to do ‘the right thing’? What more could or should be done?*

7.1. I think that it is important that the civil service does not regard itself as operating in isolation from the service users and stakeholders who are affected by its decisions and advice, nor regards itself as having the monopoly on providing advice to ministers. I believe that the civil service has come a long way in this respect but there is still more to be done. In Wales, which has been my only direct experience, the civil service strives to be open to other ideas and perspectives and seeks to listen and to learn from the wisdom of others.

7.2. Under the leadership of the First Minister, and working together with other public bodies, we are seeking to take forward the idea of a “One Wales Public Service.” There is much in common between those in leadership in the public service and much we can learn from each other. This approach seeks to embed joint working and sharing of learning, together with making it easier for people to move between sectors through secondments and other exchanges. I believe that this approach

will help all of us to approach issues with an open mind and one which is informed by wider experiences.

8. *Do you have any comments on the recommendations made by the Psychosocial Expert Group?*

8.1. Only to note that the report was a sad reminder of the long-term significant impact upon the lives of individuals which can result when the public service does not get it right.

9. *Do you have any comments on the evidence of the Public Health and Administration Expert Group?*

9.1. I have reflected my thoughts in my evidence above.

10. *Do you have any additional reflections on the evidence drawn to your attention?*

10.1. I will certainly be studying the outcome of the Inquiry carefully and responding appropriately but in the meantime I am going to draw the attention of my senior management team to the messages which have already emerged from the work so far and the learning which we need to take from those messages.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 25th October 2022