

Witness Name: RAJ JOHAL

Statement No: WITN0360001

Dated: 18 January 2026

THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF RAJ JOHAL

I, RAJ JOHAL, will say as follows: -

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a retired police officer having formerly served with Nottinghamshire Police.

This witness statement is made to assist the Nottingham Inquiry (the “**Inquiry**”) with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 30th July 2025 (the “**Request**”).

BACKGROUND

2. I started my career in 1993 as a member of front counter staff based at Radford Road Police Station, Nottingham.
3. In July 1996, I joined the police service as a uniformed police officer and retired in June 2025. I worked as a uniformed officer for many years, in different front line roles; section

officer, Beat Manager, Street Offences Team, Prisoner handling team and in 2006, I joined the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

4. During my police service, I studied part-time and attained a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) degree in 2001 and Legal Practice Course (LPC) in 2004. In 2005, I qualified as a Professionalising Investigations Programme 2 (PIP) investigator, which meant I qualified as a detective accredited under the PIP to lead serious and complex criminal investigations, with responsibility for evidence gathering, investigative strategy, interviewing and case preparation in accordance with PACE and national standards. I qualified as a PIP 2 video Interviewer, whereby I was trained to conduct and record visually recorded interviews with vulnerable or significant witnesses and suspects, ensuring interviews were legally compliant, fair and evidentially robust. As a PIP 2 tutor, I supervised, coached and assessed less- experienced investigators and supported their professional development, ensuring investigative standards were met. In 2010, I qualified as a tier three suspect and witness interviewer which meant I was trained to the highest national level to conduct complex, high risk interviews with suspects and witnesses, including serious offences applying advanced planning, questioning and evaluation techniques. In 2015, I qualified as a family liaison officer.

5. The following information is a summary of duties and responsibilities I carried out;
 - Investigation of serious and complex crime
 - Conduct suspects/victims/witness interviews
 - Video interviewing significant, vulnerable and intimidated witnesses
 - Family liaison officer dealing with families providing support, guidance, and communication during challenging times

- Manage investigations from report of incident to finalisation
 - Gather and analyses evidence
 - Work in partnership with variety of departments and external agencies
 - Assessing quality of evidence and reconciling conflicts within evidence
 - Reviewing evidence and whether Threshold criteria met
 - Understanding criminal and civil law
6. Throughout my career my main priority has always been to deliver a high standard of service to members of the public. Alongside my day job working in CID, I would often assist the Major Crime Unit. In addition, once I had qualified as a FLO, I would often assist the Major Crime Unit and the Serious Collision Investigation Unit when there were incidents where families had lost a member of their family.

THE ROLE OF FLO

7. A Family Liaison Officer (FLO) is a specially trained police officer responsible for acting as the dedicated point of contact between the police investigation and the bereaved or affected family. The purpose of the role is to ensure that families are:
- Kept informed of the progress of the investigation in a timely and accurate way;
 - Supported and safeguarded, recognising the impact of trauma, grief and shock;
 - Able to understand key police and CPS processes, including evidential procedures, decision-making and court proceedings;

- To provide information which may assist the investigation.
8. FLOs do not give legal advice or act as counsellors, but provide structured, trauma-informed communication and practical guidance, helping families navigate the criminal justice process and maintain confidence that the case is being handled thoroughly and transparently.
 9. Within Nottinghamshire Police, the FLO role is governed by the College of Policing Major Crime Homicide Family Liaison Manual (**URN: NGPF0009594**) and is overseen by a Family Liaison Co-ordinator (FLC) to ensure welfare, consistency of approach and adherence to the investigative strategy set by the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO). FLOs are deployed following a strategic decision by the SIO based on investigative and welfare needs.
 10. To act as a FLO, officers must complete the nationally accredited College of Policing Family Liaison Officer course, which includes training in:
 - investigative strategy and evidence handling;
 - trauma-informed practice and bereavement awareness;
 - disclosure responsibilities and information management;
 - cultural and religious considerations;
 - professional boundaries and ethics.
 12. FLOs also undertake periodic continued professional development (CPD) and re-accreditation. At the time of these events, I was a fully accredited FLO within Nottinghamshire Police. My role was to act as the dedicated link between the SIO and

the families of the surviving victims, providing accurate and timely updates, explaining key processes in a way that could be understood, and ensuring ongoing support and safeguarding throughout the criminal justice process.

13. I have been asked to set out the relevant policies and guidelines that apply to the role of the FLO including what is expected under the victim code.

14. The role of a Family Liaison Officer is governed by the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for Family Liaison (**URN: NGPF0009606**), together with Nottinghamshire Police's Family Liaison Coordination and Development Procedure (**URN: NGPF0007415**). These frameworks set out the purpose of the FLO role, the standards of professionalism expected, the requirement for oversight by a Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC), and the need to ensure that family contact is accurate, accountable, and aligned with the investigative strategy set by the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO).

15. The College of Policing – Major Crime / Homicide Family Liaison Practice is the national framework governing the deployment and conduct of FLOs in major crime investigations. It sets out:
 - The overarching purpose of family liaison in support of the investigative strategy
 - The requirement for a documented family liaison strategy set by the SIO
 - The oversight role of the Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC)
 - Expectations around record-keeping, disclosure, and information sharing
 - Professional standards, boundaries and ethical considerations

- Trauma-informed working and safeguarding considerations.
16. This guidance emphasises that FLOs are not solely providing welfare support – they are part of the *investigative function* and assist in gathering information relevant to the inquiry.
17. Each police force has its own force-level policy derived from the College of Policing guidance. The Nottinghamshire Police Family Liaison Policy (**URN: NGPF0007415**) sets out:
- How FLOs are appointed and deployed (usually by the SIO)
 - Supervision, welfare and support through the FLC
 - Contact expectations and continuity of service
 - Local recording and review processes
 - Procedures for escalation if concerns arise
 - Working within the Victims' Code requirements
 - Standards for professionalism and handover, particularly in lengthy or complex cases.
18. The FLO role is subject to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime ('the Victims' Code') (**URN: WITN0019002**), which places a legal duty on the police to ensure that bereaved families and surviving victims are treated with dignity and respect, receive clear and timely information, and have a single, consistent point of contact. In practice, this means that FLOs must communicate proactively, ensure information is comprehensible, and maintain regular contact so that families are not left feeling excluded from the process.

19. The most relevant rights under the Victims' Code and the FLO's responsibilities in practice include:

- Right to be kept informed of the investigation in a timely and meaningful way – FLO provides updates as soon as operationally appropriate.
- Right to clear, accurate and accessible explanations of decisions – FLO explains police or CPS decisions in plain language.
- Right to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect – FLO works in a trauma-informed and culturally sensitive manner.
- Right to access specialist support services – FLO signposts and facilitates referrals to bereavement, counselling, safeguarding or legal support.
- Right to ask questions and receive answers – FLO responds promptly unless restricted by legal or evidential considerations.
- Right to a single point of contact – FLO acts as the dedicated link between the investigation and the family.

20. The FLO role also aligns with Authorised Professional Practice (APP) – Investigation (**URN: NGPF0009594**) which reinforces:

- Ethical standards and lawful handling of information
- Cultural and religious awareness in family contact
- The need to avoid secondary trauma
- Contemporaneous notes and accurate record-keeping.

21. In summary, FLOs are required to maintain professional, trauma-informed engagement with families, provide timely and meaningful updates, ensure access to support

services, and contribute to the investigative function while remaining accountable and aligned with the overall strategy of the Major Crime investigation.

21. I have been asked what if any previous experience did I have in acting as a FLO in a case of murder/or attempted murder.

22. I qualified as a Family Liaison Officer in 2015 and since that time I have supported the Major Crime Unit (MCU) on several homicide investigations. I have also undertaken deployments as a FLO for the Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU), providing liaison and support to families bereaved through fatal road traffic incidents.

23. Since qualifying, I have acted as the lead, and in most cases the sole, FLO in several investigations. From memory, I have provided family liaison support in a number of murder cases and countless SCIU investigations. I cannot recall all the operation names for these cases but can state I was the FLO in relation to the death of Lyrico Steede, Clair Ablewhite, Ricardo Cotteral (Operation Holyhead), Operation Clamshell, Operation Riverly and the death of my colleague Sergeant Graham Saville. I have been a FLO on several SCIU investigations however, due to the fact I no longer have access to my work laptop, I am unable to name these. Each case required a high level of sensitivity, organisation, and resilience to ensure that bereaved families were treated with dignity and compassion while also maintaining a clear link with the investigative process.

24. The FLO role quickly became a part of policing that I felt deeply committed to. It gave me a sense of purpose beyond my daily work within CID, as I recognised the importance of supporting families through the most difficult and traumatic periods of their lives.
25. In recognition of my dedication and contribution to family liaison work, I was nominated by Nottinghamshire Police for the National Lifetime Achievement Award in 2024.
26. I have been asked how, when and why I was selected for the role of FLO in the present matter. My response is I am not entirely certain of the exact process used to allocate Family Liaison Officers in this matter. I recall being asked to come into work early on the morning of the deployment. Upon arrival, I was asked to meet with the Family Liaison Coordinator, DCI Gould, in the Major Crime Unit. Several other FLOs had been called in from different departments, including SCIU, CID and Public Protection Unit (PPU).

CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

27. There was a clear sense of urgency to update the families of Barnaby Webber and Grace O'Malley-Kumar. By the time I met DCI Gould, the FLOs for the families of the deceased victims had already been selected. I was given a brief synopsis of the incident and was initially told to return to my office as I was not required. While I was taken aback by this decision, I did not dwell on it.
28. A couple of hours later, I received a call from DI Gould who instructed me to contact (in her words), 'the walking wounded,' referring to the three surviving victims: Marcin

Gawronski, Sharon Miller and Wayne Birkett. I was asked to visit all three as soon as possible, while they were still at the Queens Medical Centre. On that day, I was accompanied by an officer from SCIU, DC Melbourne.

29. The following day, the SCIU officer was required elsewhere, meaning the second FLO was no longer available to assist me. From that point onward, I became the sole FLO for all three families and continued in that role until the conclusion of my involvement in the case.
30. I have been asked to describe my specific role in relation to the matters relating to the attacks by Valdo Calocane and subsequent prosecution. My response is that I was deployed as the sole Family Liaison Officer for the three surviving victims of the attacks by Valdo Calocane.
31. My role began when I first visited them at Queens Medical Centre, where I introduced myself, explained the purpose of the FLO role, and assessed their immediate welfare needs while offering reassurance and continuity of contact.
32. From that point forward, I maintained consistent communication with the victims and their families, both in person and by telephone. During the early stages of the investigation, I took my work mobile phone home with me and made myself available outside normal working hours so that they could contact me whenever needed. I met with them regularly, building a rapport based on trust and reliability. I would sit with them, listen to their concerns, and identify any areas where additional support or intervention was required.

33. As the victims began to process the events and the wider impact of the attacks, I explained the investigative process, court proceedings, and decisions taken by the Senior Investigating Officer in clear and accessible terms. I carried out regular welfare visits to their home addresses to ensure their safety and wellbeing, and I signposted and referred them to appropriate services, including solicitors, healthcare professionals and specialist support agencies.

34. I liaised with other departments and investigative teams to ensure that updates were accurate, timely and consistent, and that no information was shared that could compromise the integrity of the investigation. Throughout my deployment, I recorded every action, contact, visit and telephone call contemporaneously within my FLO logs which I refer to below. Each entry was dated and submitted to the Major Crime Unit (MCU) Op inbox to ensure a full and auditable record of family liaison activity.

35. In essence, my role was to provide a single and consistent point of contact for each of the survivors, ensuring their rights under the Victims' Code were upheld and that they were supported throughout both the investigation and the subsequent prosecution process.

36. I retired from the Police Service in June 2025 and, as part of the retirement process, I was required to return all police-issued equipment. This included my laptop, which contained copies of FLO logs, emails, daybook entries, correspondence and documents relevant to this case. I also maintained contemporaneous notes using OneNote and my Investigator's Daybook. I no longer have access to either platform.

37. By reference to my Daybook for the period 11th May 2023 to 30th July 2023 (**URN: NGPF0009618**, p.34), I can see that I received a briefing from DI Claire Gould on the 13th June 2023 about the attacks which had happened in Nottingham that morning. I recorded details of Sharon Miller and Marcin Gawronski.
38. On the same date, at 13.28, I attended Queens Medical Centre (QMC) to meet Marcin and Sharon. (**URN: NGPF0009618**, p.34)
39. By reference to my Family Liaison Log dated 14th June 2023 (**URN: NGPF0009233**), I visited the Queens Medical Centre on 14th June 2023 and spoke with Wayne Birkett's son, Jordan Birkett. I introduced myself as the allocated Family Liaison Officer. I was informed that Wayne was in a relationship with a female called Tracey.
40. On the same day, I also met Sharon Miller on Ward C30 at QMC. At the time of the visit, she was not feeling very well. She was not fully coherent. She did not know when she was going to be discharged but confirmed she would provide a statement when she was.
41. She was asked whether she wanted to meet the Chief Constable and stated she did not need to see the Chief Constable. She was asked whether she felt anything had been omitted in the media that she felt that needed to be detailed. She stated she did not feel anything needed to be added in relation to her. She stated she did not want to be involved in a press conference. I made a note of this in my Daybook and also completed

a FLO Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009598**). I have noted that I incorrectly referred to Sharon as Sarah in the entry.

42. On the 14th June 2023, I also attended Ward C30 and met Marcin Gawronski. Marcin was asked whether he wanted to meet the Chief Constable and he declined. Marcin stated he did not want to be involved in a press conference. I made a note of the visit in a FLO Log (**URN: NGPF0009609**).
43. I also made a note in my Daybook of the visit and the information I obtained (**URN: NGPF0009618**, pp.35 and 36).
44. On the 15th June 2023, at 15:25 I made contact with Jordan Birkett and asked Jordan for an update into his father's recovery. Jordan stated Wayne was off ventilation, but very confused (**URN: NGPF0009237**).
45. On 15th June 2023, by reference to my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009599**), I spoke to Sharon Miller over the phone and read out the proposed press release.
46. On 15th June 2023, by reference to my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009610**), I attended Marcin Gawronski's home address and took possession of the clothing he was wearing at the time of the incident. I then took him to the location where the incident occurred. Later the same day I conducted a Video Recorded Interview (VRI) with him at St Ann's Police Station. Also later the same day, I read out the proposed press release to him.
47. I also recorded these events in my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009618**, pages 38 and 40).

48. By reference to my Log entry dated the 16th June 2023 (**URN: NGPF0009238**), I visited the Intensive Care Unit at QMC at 12.20 and spoke with the nurse in charge, who informed me that Wayne Birkett was going to be kept in the ICU for the next few days. This was the first time I met Wayne's Birkett's partner, Tracey Hodgson.
49. On the same day, I also met with Sharon Miller at the hospital (**URN: NGPF0009600**). I discussed taking an account from her by means of VRI, which she agreed for a later date.
50. On the 17th June 2023, by reference to my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009618**, page 40) and my Log Entry (**URN: NGPF0009601**), I note that I spoke with Sharon Miller. She called me to say that was unhappy that her name was released to the press. I spoke to her about asking the SIO to look into applying to the court for reporting restrictions. We also made arrangements for her to give a VRI.
51. I also spoke with Jordan Birkett and obtained an update on his father's progress (**URN: NGPF0009618**, page 41).
52. Also, on the 17th June 2023, I made a witness statement on an MG11 template, detailing the steps I had taken to obtain evidence from each of the three (**URN: NGPF0002903**).
53. On 18th June 2023, at 14:15, I visited the QMC to see Wayne Birkett. He was in a wheelchair and sitting outside. He was not sure why I was there and did not know what had happened (**URN: NGPF0009239**).

54. On 18th June 2023, by reference to my Log entry (URN: **NGPF0009611**), I updated Marcin Gawronski in relation to defendant status and the next court hearing. He stated he did not want to attend the court hearing and was very emotional about it. I obtained a DNA sample from him for the purposes of elimination. I also made a witness statement to record the taking of the DNA sample for the purpose of the investigation (URN: **NGPF0002905**).
55. On the same day, I went to see Sharon Miller at her home and took from her the clothing she had been wearing when she was attacked. We then travelled to St Ann's Police Station, where I conducted a VRI with her. A police Crime Scene Investigator attended to take photographs of her injuries (URN: **NGPF0009602**).
56. I also made notes of this in my Daybook (URN: **NGPF0009618**, pages 41 and 42) and also a witness statement for the purposes of the investigation (URN: **NGPF0002906**).
57. At 11:34 hours on 20th June 2023, my Log entry (URN: **NGPF0009240**), details my having made contact with Jordan Birkett updating him in relation to the remand hearing.
58. On 20th June 2023, by reference to my Log entry (URN: **NGPF0009603**), I updated Sharon Miller in relation to the remand hearing.
59. On 20th June 2023, by reference to my Log entry (URN: **NGPF0009612**), I informed Marcin Gawronski that the defendant had been remanded into custody and his next court hearing would be 25th September 2023 and that a trial date had been set for

January 2024. Marcin Gawronski stated he was fed up with reporters coming to his door and his name being published in the papers.

60. I also made a note of the above in my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009618**, pages 43, 46 and 47).
61. I contacted all three victims on the 22nd June 2023 and 28th June 2023 as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009617**). I spoke to all three victims in relation to their welfare and told them that the Prince of Wales and His Majesty King Charles would be writing to them.
62. On 3rd July 2023, my Daybook has notes of contact made with all three victims that day to obtain updates on their conditions. I also passed to them letters of condolence from the Prince of Wales and the King, and from the Polish Embassy for Marcin Gawronski. I also provided details of Victim Support **URN: NGPF0009618**, pages 47 to 49).
63. By reference to my MG11 statement dated 12th July 2023 (**URN: NGPF0002901**), I assisted investigators by speaking with witnesses Rizwan Tabassum and Zia Tabassum. This statement details my contact with the witnesses and ultimately their refusal to make an official statement.
64. My Daybook has entries on the 14th July 2023 detailing a list of questions for all three victims, taken from an email sent to me by DC Beddow. By reference to my notes, I met Wayne Birkett at Lindon Lodge, then Sharon Miller at her home address and then Marcin

Gawronski at his home address to pass on the information provided by DC Beddoe.
(URN: NGPF0009618, pages 80 - 81)

65. I made a Log Entry in relation to my visit to Wayne Birkett on the 15th July 2023 (URN: NGPF0009241), I visited Wayne at Lindon Lodge, Rehabilitation Unit and met Wayne and his family. I discussed how to obtain a victim personal statement from Wayne. The family were asked whether Wayne wanted to meet the prosecutor and if I could pass their details to the Bereavement Family scheme and Family Care unit. They were asked whether they wanted to meet the SIO and Wayne Birkett said he would think about it.
66. I made a Log entry in respect of my visit to Sharon Miller on 15th July 2023 (URN: NGPF0009604). I met Sharon Miller at her home address and asked her whether she wanted to meet the prosecutor, which she declined. I asked whether I could pass her details to the Bereavement Family Scheme, and the Victim Care Unit. She stated she would like support. She was asked whether she wanted to meet the SIO and she declined.
67. I made a further Log entry on 15th July 2023 in respect of my visit to Marcin Gawronski (URN: NGPF0009613) I asked him whether he wanted to speak with the Prosecutor; Marcin Gawronski declined. He confirmed he would like support from the Bereavement Family Scheme and the Victim Care Unit.
68. I made an MG11 statement dated 25th July 2023 (URN: NGPF0002907), detailing the VRI I conducted with Sharon Miller.

69. I made a second MG11 statement on the same date (**URN: NGPF0002908**), relating to the video interview with Marcin Gawronski.
70. On the 17th August 2023, I made visits to see Wayne Birkett and Marcin Gawronski at their home addresses. I made a note in my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009619**, page 10).
71. On the 23rd August 2023, my Daybook has a note relating to my attending Wayne Birkett's home address and a list of four points to ask him; meet SIO, meet CPS, obtain a MG11/VRI and visit location of the incident (**URN: NGPF0009619**, page 15).
72. In addition to my role as a FLO, I also supported the Major Crime Unit (MCU) with enquiries that were not directly involved with the three families. During that part of the investigation, I submitted several officer's reports and witness statements. I have only been able to access one officer's report, and I refer to the report, completed by DC Grayson on 16th August 2023 as exhibit **URN: NGPF0009236**.
73. On 11th September 2023, I made a note in my Daybook relating to my having visited Marcin Gawronski at 1:45 pm, Sharon Miller at 2:15 pm and Tracey Hodgson at 3:08. (**URN: NGPF0009619**, page 48).
74. By reference to my MG11 statement dated 12th September 2023 (**NGPF0002902**), I received an email dated 29th August 2023 from Sharon Miller containing images of the injuries that she sustained.

75. At 10:00 on 22nd September 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009595**), I attended Wayne Birkett and Tracey Hodgson's home address and obtained background details from Tracey Hodgson. Later the same day, I conducted a VRI with Wayne.
76. By reference to my Daybook, I can see that I contacted Sharon Miller and Marcin Gawronski on 5th October 2023 (**URN: NGPF0009619**, page 65). I am unable to state the reason as to why I had visited both the victim families.
77. On 11th October 2023, I revisited Tracey Hodgson and read through a written statement which she signed.
78. By reference to my Daybook, (**URN: NGPF0009619**, pages 74 – 75), on the 13th October 2023, I made a note of an update from the SIO and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) concerning psychiatric evidence relating to the defendant. I cannot now be sure, but I think these notes relate to a verbal briefing by DI Gould.
79. On the 27th October 2023, I made an MG11 statement (**URN: NGPF0002910**), detailing an email that I had received from Sharon Miller on the 29th August 2023 which contained images of injury to her right leg.
80. On the 17th November 2023, I made an MG11 statement (**URN: NGPF0002904**) relating to the VRI I had conducted with Wayne Birkett. The statement confirmed that I had reviewed the record of the interview and confirmed it was accurate.

81. On the same day, I noted in my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009621**, pages 3-4) two updates to share with the victims, namely that the defendant had been moved to HMP Manchester secure unit and that NHS Healthcare would be writing to them.
82. By reference to my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009621**, page 8), on the 27th November 2023, I noted that I had updated the three victims.
83. By reference to my MG11 statement dated 26th November 2023 (**URN: NGPF0002909**), I detailed my conducting a VRI with Wayne Birkett on 22nd September 2023.
84. On 28th November 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009605**), I updated Sharon Miller in relation to the Pre Trial Preparation Hearing (PTPH); that the defendant had pleaded guilty to three counts of attempted murder and three counts of manslaughter, which the CPS did not accept, and the case had been adjourned to January 2024.
85. On 28th November 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009614**), I contacted Marcin Gawronski and shared the same update with him as I had done with Sharon Miller.
86. On 28th November 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009614**), I contacted Wayne Birkett and shared the same update with him as I had done with Sharon Miller and Marcin Gawronski. None of the victim families attended the court hearing, although they were made aware of the court hearing date, time and location.

21. On 1st December 2023, my Daybook notes that I visited all three victims (**URN: NGPF0009621**, page 12). There are no further details in my Daybook as to why I visited the families. I often went to carry out welfare checks, but I cannot say why I would have visited the victims that day. The details of the visits may have been documented on my OneNote which I no longer have access to.
87. On 5th December 2023, my Daybook references Marcin Gawronski, but I cannot now recall if I contacted him on that date (**URN: NGPF0009621**, page 15).
88. By reference to my Daybook, I met with Marcin Gawronski on the 8th December 2023 to take notes for his Victim Personal Statement (VPS) (**URN: NGPF0009621**, pages 19).
89. On the 11th December, by reference to my Daybook, I met with Wayne Birkett and Tracey Hodgson to take a VPS from each. (**URN: NGPF0009621**, page 29).
90. By reference to my Daybook, I have a note that I spoke with Sharon Miller on the 24th December 2023. I have noted that she '*did not want to go through it again and made notes instead,*' which I believe was a reference to her not wanting to complete a VPS at that time (**URN: NGPF0009621**, page 49).
91. By reference to my Daybook, I contacted Sharon Miller again on the 14th January 2024 and took her VPS. I also discussed court with her and the showing of a video compilation. My notes also refer to Tracey Hodgson, Wayne Birkett and Marcin

Gawronski but I cannot recall if I visited them on the same day (URN: NGPF0009621, page 67).

92. My Daybook has a note that, on the 18th January 2024, in company with officers from the criminal investigation, I met with Wayne Birkett and Tracey Hodgson and showed them a proposed press release and they viewed footage. Wayne was upset by the footage and Tracey stated she thought it was too much for the public domain (URN: NGPF0009621, page 68).
93. On the 20th January 2024, by reference to my Daybook, I visited Sharon Miller and Marcin Gawronski at their home addresses (URN: NGPF0009621, page 71).
94. My Log entry for Sharon Miller for that date (URN: NGPF0009607), notes that she stated that she did not want to attend the sentencing hearing. The CCTV compilation which was to be released after the hearing was played to her. She was upset and told me that was the reason she did not want to go to Court.
95. My Log entry of the same date in respect of Marcin Gawronski (URN: NGPF0009615) records that I asked him whether he wanted to attend court and he declined. I also informed him of the proposed media release and played the CCTV footage for him. He did not make any representations in respect of the media release.
96. On the 23rd, 24th and 25th January 2024, I attended Nottingham Crown Court with Wayne Birkett, Tracey Hodgson, Jordan Birkett and Ian Birkett, as per my Log entry (URN: NGPF0009596). We attended court for each of the three days of the sentencing

hearing. They were met by the SIO and the CPS and Counsel and Wayne was offered a meeting after the sentencing to discuss the investigation. Wayne was upset throughout the three days and felt that the sentence was not punishment enough.

97. On 28th January 2024, I spoke with Tracey Hodgson on a telephone call and informed her about the review into the care given to the defendant, to be carried out by the CQC.
98. On 29th January 2024, I contacted Tracey Hodgson to confirm her email address and informed her that ACC Griffin would be sending Wayne Birkett an email.
99. On 25th January 2024, as per my Log Entry (**URN: NGPF0009608**), I contacted Sharon Miller and updated her in relation to the sentence imposed. She was accepting of the sentence and thanked everyone involved in the investigation.
100. On 28th January 2024, I telephoned Sharon Miller to inform her that the CQC were to carry out a review of the defendant's care by the NHS.
101. On 29th January 2024, I spoke with Sharon Miller to confirm her email address and to informed her that ACC Griffin was in the process of sending her an email.
102. On 25th January 2024, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0009616**), I contacted Marcin Gawronski and updated him on the sentence handed to the defendant. He was annoyed that the defendant had not been sent to prison but understood the reasons why. He asked for a copy of the footage and for the return of his clothing.

103. On 28th January 2024, I contacted Marcin Gawronski to inform him that the CQC had been asked to review the care of the Defendant by the NHS.
104. On 29th January 2024, I spoke with Marcin to confirm his email address as ACC Griffin was in the process of sending an email to him.
105. By reference to my Daybook, I contacted all three victims on 19th February 2024 to update them. I recall being unable to get hold of Marcin Gawronski and left a message. Tracey Hodgson told me that she and Wayne Birkett had a meeting at Police HQ on the Friday of that week (**URN: NGPF0009224**, page 13). I cannot recall the conversation as there are no further details in the Daybook; however, there would have been a record in OneNote that I no longer have access to.
106. By reference to my Daybook, I see that I contacted all three victims on 19th April 2024 to notify them that the case was being heard at the Court of Appeal on 8th May 2024. They were all asked if they wanted to attend. Sharon Miller stated she did not but would want an update. Marcin Gawronski stated that he did not want to attend or have a CVP link. Tracey Hodgson stated that their solicitor would attend in person and that she and Wayne Birkett would like a CVP link (**URN: NGPF0009224**, page 67).
107. On 8th May 2024, I made notes of the appeal hearing in respect the sentence imposed by the Crown Court in my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009224**, pages 85 and 85).
108. On 14th May 2024, by reference to my Daybook (**URN: NGPF0009224**, pages 93-94), I update all three victims with the outcome of the appeal, which was that the sentence

remained as it was. I have noted that Marcin Gawronski repeated his request for the return of his clothes and a copy of the CCTV compilation.

109. I recall that during one of the plea hearings I was overseas on annual leave. As I was the only FLO allocated to these three families, I took my work mobile phone abroad to ensure continuity of contact. I updated the victims promptly once the defendant entered pleas of manslaughter and attempted murder.

110. Two of the victims, Marcin Gawronski and Sharon Miller, did not wish to attend court in person. I nevertheless notified them of all hearing dates and timings and made clear that I would support them if they later chose to attend. The third victim, Wayne Birkett, along with his partner, wished to be present for sentencing. I ensured they received advance notice, explained the process, and transported them to court. I remained with them throughout the hearing to provide support and guidance.

111. Part of my note taking was done on OneNote where I had a file dedicated to Operation Hendrix. The Operation Hendrix tab only held information concerning the operation. Details on OneNote included victim names, DOB, home address, telephone number, email address, dynamics and information, crime numbers, SIO and FLC details together with any messages that needed to be read out to the victims and details of visits made to see the families. I understand that a search has been made for my notes but that my account was closed when I retired and the notes no longer exist.

NOTIFICATION OF PSYCHIATRIC DEFENCE

112. As I was considered as the FLO for the 'walking wounded' I was not privy to any meetings or conversations that were held between Counsel, CPS, senior police officers, FLC and FLOs. Therefore, I was not part of the discussions, however, with regards to passing details of decisions made by these authorities, I relayed the information as directed via emails or telephone conversations.
113. I have been asked to comment on conversations that I had with CPS and the families in respect of the possibility of a mental health defence and possible implications. I was not present during meetings with the CPS; however, I was asked to relay information that was sent to me via an email by DI Gould on 24 November 2023, titled 'Re FLO- Forms of Words' (**URN: NGPF0007496**).
114. On 24th November 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0003141**), I contacted all three victims and read out verbatim points made in the 'Re FLO- Forms of Word' email (**URN: NGPF0007496**). This covered the point of a mental health defence and possible implications.
115. I have been asked to comment on having any conversations with (1) CPS and (2) the families in respect of confirmation that the defence of diminished responsibility was in fact being pursued and its implications. I was not present during meetings with the CPS; however, I was asked to relay information that was sent to me via an email by DI Sanders on 24 November 2023, titled 'Re FLO- Forms of Words' (**URN: NGPF0007496**).

116. On 24th November 2023, as per my Log entry(**URN: NGPF0003141**), I contacted all three victims and read out verbatim points made in the 'Forms of Word' email. This covered the points relating to diminished responsibility being pursued and its implications.
117. I have been asked to comment on having any conversations with (1) CPS and (2) the families in respect of the introduction of a second prosecution psychiatric expert. I was not present during meetings with the CPS, and I did not have this information to relay to the families as this point was not covered in the email sent to me on 24 November 2023, title 'Re FLO – Forms of Words'(URN: **NGPF0007496**).
118. I have been asked to comment on having any conversations with (1) CPS and (2) the families in respect of confirmation that the defence of diminished responsibility was finally accepted by the prosecution and its implications. I was not present during meeting with the CPS; however, I was asked to relay information that was sent to me via an email by DI Gould on 24th November 2023, titled 'Re FLO- Forms of Words'(URN: **NGPF0007496**).
119. On 24th November 2023, as per my Log entry (**URN: NGPF0003141**), I contacted all three families and read out verbatim points made in the 'Re FLO- Forms of Words' email. This covered the points relating to the defence of diminished responsibility being accepted and implications.
120. I have been asked to comment on having any conversations with (1) CPS and (2) the families in respect of a 'hybrid order' or other sentence and its implications. I was not

present during meeting with the CPS; however, I was asked to relay information that was sent to me via an email by DI Sanders on 24th November 2023, titled 'Re FLO-Forms of Words'(URN: NGPF0007496).

121. On 24th November 2023, as per my Log entry (URN: NGPF0003141), I contacted all three families and read out verbatim points made in the 'Forms of Word' email. This covered the points relating to two possible disposals, 'hybrid order' and hospital order and the implication to either sentence.

MATTERS ARISING

22. I have been asked what if any issues arose in respect of the timing of meetings with the families. As far as I can recall, other than me as the FLO, the families did not meet any senior officers, counsel or CPS other than at Court. Therefore, there were no issues that arose with regards to timing of any meeting. As far as I recall the only time Wayne Birkett and Tracey Hodgson met Counsel and CPS lawyer were on the day of sentencing.

122. I have been asked what if any issues arose in respect of the location of meetings. Initially I met the victims in hospital and once they had been discharged, I would always meet them at their home addresses. I did not have any issues with meeting with the victims and their families.

123. I have been asked what if any issues arose with regards to liaison with respect of 1. Psychiatric reports, 2. Potential or accepted defences, 3. Sentencing and / or 4. the provision of other legal papers or advice. I was not privy to conversations relating to the psychiatric reports, acceptance of the defences and sentencing. I recall the case being heard for the first time in November 2023, whilst I was abroad. I was asked to update the three victim families by the DCI Gould, and I recall a sense of panic and urgency to update the three victims.

124. I have been asked what, if any, issues arose in respect of the involvement of any non-family members. I cannot recall there being any issues arising from non-family members.

125. I have been asked what, if any, issues arose in respect of the time available to the family / those affected to consider matters arising. I cannot recall there being any issues relating to the period available to the families to consider matters. Although I recall Wayne Birkett could no longer fully understand the processes and found it very difficult to comprehend the court process.

126. I have been asked what, if any, concerns I have in respect of the actions of the CPS, including but not limited to their relationship with the families and the provision of information. The CPS did not have any contact with the three victims. As far as I can recall, the CPS met with Wayne Birkett and his partner on the day of sentencing in the witness care office within Crown Court.

127. I have been asked what, if any, concerns I have in respect of the relationship between the CPS and Police and their respective roles in the context of liaison with the family. I am unable to comment on the relationship between the CPS and the Police. Neither the senior officer nor CPS representatives met the three victims in advance of the court hearings. I can only vouch for myself in that I tried my best to keep all three victims updated with all the information that was provided to me.

128. I have been asked if, in my view, each of the bereaved family group and survivors were offered the same level of support by (1) the Police (2) the CPS. My response is no. I cannot comment on the level of service or support each of the bereaved families were given but it is evident that the three surviving victims were not given the same level of service or support as those who lost their loved ones. Each bereaved family were allocated two FLOs and I am aware that Ian Coates' family was allocated two pairs of FLOs. As a single FLO for three families, I hope I provided a satisfactory level of service. No one from CPS or senior officers met with the three victims, other than Wayne Birkett having met CPS and Counsel at court, on the day of sentencing.

HMCPST REVIEW

129. I have been asked whether, in my view, the HMCPST review accurately and adequately sets out the history of the case and the actions of the FLOs. My response is that in my view, the HMCPST review sets out the procedural history of the Calocane case accurately in terms of the CPS decision-making process, the timeline of the criminal

proceedings, and the legal considerations relied upon in accepting the pleas of manslaughter by reason of diminished responsibility.

130. However, while the review does acknowledge the role of Family Liaison Officers and recognises the importance of liaison as a vital link between investigators, the CPS and families, I do not consider that it provides a fully adequate account of the practical reality of the FLO role throughout this investigation.

131. The report focuses on the CPS engagement with the bereaved families and does not go into much detail about the day-to-day level of contact, the emotional labour involved, the safeguarding considerations, or the ongoing support provided to the survivors. It does not reflect the frequency of contact, the extent of availability outside normal hours, or the practical steps taken to ensure families were kept informed as soon as information could be shared.

132. While I consider the HMCPSI review to be accurate in its summary of the timeline and legal framework of the case, I do not believe it fully captures or reflects the breadth and intensity of the work undertaken by FLOs to support the surviving victims and families on a continuous basis throughout the criminal process.

LESSONS LEARNED

133. I have been asked if I consider there are any structural issues (such as guidelines/policies, training) which contributed to any issues I have identified. From my own experience in this case, I did not encounter structural barriers that prevented me

from carrying out my role or providing support to the families I was assigned to. I was able to communicate with the families regularly, explain developments, and ensure welfare needs were identified and acted upon.

134. I am not in a position to say that there were structural issues affecting my own delivery of the FLO function. However, I recognise that there were issues relating to some FLOs and their allocated families. I have not been privy to what these issues have been and therefore I am unable to make further comment. If improvements were to be considered, they may relate to clarification of expectations around the timing of key communications from the police to families. In my view, insufficient consideration was given to the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the families when assigning Family Liaison Officers. Greater attention to matching FLOs' experience and cultural understanding with each family could have better supported their needs.

135. I have been asked if, looking back, I consider there was anything I could or should have done differently in relation to my decision making and conduct in this case, including communication with bereaved families and survivors. I was the FLO for the three surviving victims in this case, and I believe I provided a high standard of support throughout what was a complex and emotionally demanding investigation. I remained committed to ensuring that each family was kept informed, supported, and able to access appropriate services at every stage of the process.

136. My principal priority was to ensure consistency and fairness by providing updates to all three families as closely together as possible, so that no one felt they were being treated differently or receiving information later than others. On reflection, I recognise that this

approach sometimes meant I held back slightly on communicating an update to one family until I was in a position to brief all three.

137. With the benefit of hindsight, there may have been occasions where it would have been beneficial to request additional FLO support to allow more individualised contact in parallel, rather than managing three families as a single point of contact. At the time, I continued alone because I believed continuity was of real importance to the families, and I did not want them to feel that their liaison officer was being replaced or diluted.

138. If faced with a similar situation in future, I would feel more confident in seeking extra support earlier, not because my service was lacking, but to strengthen resilience and ensure that simultaneous high-quality communication could continue without delay.

139. On reflection, the allocation of Family Liaison Officers did not sufficiently take account of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the families. It became apparent that the O'Malley-Kumar family's heritage on the father's side may not have been fully considered when FLOs were assigned. This highlighted that closer alignment between an FLO's cultural awareness, experience and understanding and each family's background could have strengthened trust, improved communication, and enhanced the overall support provided to the families at a profoundly difficult time.

140. I have been asked what steps, looking back, could or should be taken to improve communication with and treatment of bereaved families and survivors in the future. In terms of my own conduct, I believe I did everything I could to maintain clear and timely communication with the three surviving victims, and I acted promptly whenever

information was passed to me by the Family Liaison Co-ordinator or the investigation team. I was not present at the meetings with CPS, senior officers and the other FLOs and therefore I could only update the families on the information I was provided.

141. I provided the victims and their families with my direct contact details and made myself available to them at all times, including outside normal working hours, to ensure they felt supported and able to reach me whenever they needed assistance. I also signposted them to wider support agencies and services to complement the liaison role.

142. I have been asked if there any other recommendations that I consider could help prevent any of the issues that I have identified in respect of this matter. In my opinion, I was considered part of the outer circle FLO structure in this investigation, which meant I was not included in the strategic briefings or decision-making discussions attended by the FLOs assigned to the bereaved families. As a result, I was sometimes reliant on secondary updates rather than being briefed directly at source.

143. In terms of recommendations, a more structured flow of information from the investigative team and CPS directly to all FLOs, including those supporting survivors, could help ensure that every family receives the same level of preparedness before key decisions or hearings. This would also reduce the risk of families learning about developments from the media before they have been spoken to by their FLO.

144. I would like to state that I relayed information to the families accurately and in a timely manner, in accordance with the direction provided to me. Where appropriate, I attended families in person, and I made myself available to them to provide information

and support. My engagement with the families was conducted respectfully and with due sensitivity, having regard to the nature of the circumstances and the impact upon the victims.

145. I have been unable to answer some of the questions raised by the Inquiry. This is because I have not been provided with all the relevant documentation necessary to cross-reference and verify the matters referred to in this statement. Accordingly, my evidence is confined to the information available to me.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe the content of this statement to be true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed:

GRO-B

Dated: 18/01/2026

Index to First Witness Statement of Raj Johal

<u>No.</u>	<u>URN</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
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1	NGPF0009594	Family liaison manual
2	NGPF0009606	APP
3	NGPF0007415	Policy document Re: Family Liaison Officer Co-ordination and Development
4	WITN0019002	Code of Practice for Victims of Crimes in England and Wales, Ministry of Justice (November 2020)
5	NGPF0009233	FLO log 14/06/2023 BIRKETT
6	NGPF0009237	Family liaison log, 14/06/2023, police force unknown
7	NGPF0009238	Family liaison log, 16/06/2023, police force unknown
8	NGPF0009239	Family liaison log, 18/06/2023, police force unknown
9	NGPF0009240	Family liaison log, 20/06/2023, police force unknown
10	NGPF0009241	Family liaison log, 15/07/2023, police force unknown
11	NGPF0009595	FLO log 22/09/2023 BIRKETT

12	NGPF0009596	FLO log 23/01/2024 BIRKETT
13	NGPF0009598	FLO log 14/06/2023 MILLER
14	NGPF0009599	FLO log 16/06/2023 MILLER
15	NGPF0009600	FLO log 16/06/2023 MILLER 2
16	NGPF0009601	FLO log 17/06/2023 MILLER
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19	NGPF0009604	FLO log 15/07/2023 MILLER
20	NGPF0009605	FLO log 18/12/2023 MILLER
21	NGPF0009607	FLO log 20/01/2024 MILLER
22	NGPF0009608	FLO log 25/01/2024 MILLER
23	NGPF0009609	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 14/06/2023, NGPF
24	NGPF0009610	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 15/06/2023, NGPF
25	NGPF0009611	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 18/06/2023, NGPF
26	NGPF0009612	FLO log 20/06/2023 GAWRONSKI

27	NGPF0009613	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 15/07/2023, NGPF
28	NGPF0009614	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 18/12/2023, NGPF
29	NGPF0009615	Family Liaison Log for Marcin Gawronski, 20/01/2024, NGPF
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32	NGPF0009618	Investigator daybook serial 9644
33	NGPF0009619	Investigator daybook serial 7025
34	NGPF0009621	Investigator daybook serial 10316
35	NGPF0009224	Investigator daybook serial 10317
36	NGPF0002903	Witness Statement of DC Johal dated 17/06/2023
37	NGPF0002905	Witness Statement of DC Rajbinder Johal, Nottinghamshire Police dated 18/06/2023

38	NGPF0002906	Witness Statement of Rajbinder Johal dated 18/06/2023
39	NGPF0002901	Witness Statement of Rajbinder Johal dated 12/07/2023
40	NGPF0002907	Witness Statement of DC Johal dated 25/07/2023
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42	NGPF0002902	Witness Statement of DC Rajbinder Johal, Nottinghamshire Police dated 12/09/2023
43	NGPF0002910	Witness Statement of Rajbinder Johal dated 27/10/2023
44	NGPF0002904	Witness Statement of Rajbinder Johal, Nottinghamshire Police, dated 17/11/2023
45	NGPF0002909	Witness Statement of DC Rajbinder Johal, Nottinghamshire Police dated 26/11/2023
46	NGPF0009236	Officer's Report, Operation Hendrix, dated 16/08/2023 [NGPF]

47	NGPF0007496	Email from Claire Gould [NGPF] to Sarah Draper [Lincolnshire Police], Leigh Sanders [LEPF] and Mark Kimberley [NGPF], re: FLO – Forms of Words
48	NGPF0003141	Family Liaison Log to Marcin GAWRONSKI, Sharon MILLER, Wayne BIRKETT, 24/11/2023 – 26/11/2023, NPF
49	NGPF0009594	Guidance document, Re: Working with victims and witnesses, College of Policing

