

Witness Name: Andrew Neil Clarke

Statement No: WITN0451001

Dated: 11 May 2026

## THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

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### FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF ANDREW NEIL CLARKE

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- 1 I confirm that I am a Partner within Weightmans LLP and am instructed by Nottingham City Council to represent them within the Nottingham Inquiry.
  
- 2 This statement is made in response to the Rule 9 (8) request, directed to Colin Wilderspin of Nottingham City Council dated 28 April 2026. Rule 9(8) asks Nottingham City Council to address recent disclosures relating to its involvement in CCTV coverage of VC. I am responding to it as the Solicitor instructed by Nottingham City Council who has advised on document disclosure, the response to rule 9 requests, including the data disclosure and CCTV evidence for Nottingham City Council. I am not waiving privilege by providing this statement and the statement is to assist the Inquiry.
  
- 3 The Rule 9 (8) request is directed primarily at CCTV evidence. The CCTV system was and is operated by Nottingham City Council.

4 In relation to the CCTV issue, it does not appear to be directly within the terms of reference of the Inquiry. The position with CCTV in the criminal investigation and the Inquiry, until March 2026, was that it had never been an issue. There was no suggestion that inadequate or inoperative CCTV meant that there were delays in apprehending VC. Indeed, we know that the Police were able to obtain still images from the CCTV system which have been presented to the Inquiry. The earlier Rule 9 (1) and (3) requests directed to Colin Wilderspin dealt primarily with the data accessing issue of Community Protection Officers and the CCTV system in general terms, respectively.

5 The Rule 9 (3) request dated 28 October 2025 sought a statement on Nottingham City Council's role in respect of CCTV coverage of incidents in the city and liaison with police authorities in respect of CCTV matters [INQY0000032]. The request also asked Nottingham City Council to set out its involvement and dealings with the police on 13 June 2023 and any issues arising. In response to that, Colin Wilderspin gave a statement in which he provided an overview of the Woodlands CCTV control room and the procedures in place to facilitate effective information sharing with the police. His statement also set out the involvement of Nottingham City Council's CCTV Service in the events of 13 June 2023 and confirms that no issues had been identified in relation to communication between the police and the CCTV control room or CCTV coverage at that point in time. It was felt that this statement had dealt with all the relevant issues raised in that Rule 9 request.

- 6 Nottingham City Council has responded to and provided disclosure in relation to each of the Rule 9 requests received. Colin Wilderspin has provided 5 separate witness statements to the Inquiry and has provided extensive disclosure.
- 7 Disclosure was provided pursuant to and directly in response to the Rule 9 requests. The quality of the searching undertaken by NCC's CCTV staff was not anticipated to be a feature of the Inquiry until Chief Inspector Mather gave evidence to the Inquiry on 13 March 2026.
- 8 There was a clear implication from that evidence that the CCTV operatives employed by Nottingham City Council, ought to have exercised initiative and tracked cameras all over the city in order to locate VC. As a matter of fact, that is what Ms. Harvey did as her statement makes clear.
- 9 Accordingly, the way the issue of the quality of CCTV evidence materialised took the local authority by surprise and explains why this matter is being dealt with at this stage.
- 10 Following that evidence, Rule 9 requests were received on behalf of Nottingham City Council. A Rule 9 request was received directed to Nottingham City Council on 19 March 2026 and subsequently on 25 March 2026 (directed to Colin Wilderspin – Request Number 7).

- 11 In response to that, 3 witness statements have been provided to the Inquiry together with relevant disclosure, namely from Jayne Elizabeth Harvey, Brian Bussey and Kenneth Cromwell; and the Inquiry will now hear live evidence from Ms. Harvey and Mr. Bussey on 26 May 2026.
- 12 Those statements provide a great deal of information to the Inquiry about the CCTV system and issues as to the operability of the system, the competence of its operatives and police contact are, subject to the Inquiry's and Core Participant's questions, explained.
- 13 The starting point here therefore is that Nottingham City Council approached disclosure and provision of evidence by reference to the Rule 9 requests, the terms of reference, proportionality and relevance. Furthermore, they were approached in the knowledge that the quality of the CCTV search was not something that, before the Police suggested in oral evidence that it was in question, was a material issue.
- 14 In relation to the data incident involving Nottingham City Council, the Rule 9 (1) was followed and disclosure was provided in response to that Rule 9 request.
- 15 Full details of the data accessing issue have been provided by Nottingham City Council and in fact Colin Wilderspin has given an apology.

- 16 Attached to this statement are Nottingham City Council data incident documents relating to the 3 Community Protection Officers who accessed VC's records.
- 17 The data disclosed as part of the initial Rule 9 request in relation to this did not include the data incident documents as they were not in scope. However, it became clear during the family's evidence that they were not aware as to the nature and extent of information that Nottingham City Council officers had viewed.

**System searches:**

- 18 Weightmans supported Nottingham City Council with defining the relevant search terms for the Inquiry. I have been advised by Nottingham City Council that their approach followed our advice. They have told me the following:

*Nottingham City Council's completed an initial search of its internal systems in August 2025. The initial search comprised of a key word search of all case management systems used by the relevant departments at NCC to identify documents of relevance. The key words used included "Valdo Calocane", "Valdo Amissao Mendes Calocane", "Adam Mendes", and "Val Mendes".*

*A further search was then completed to review any data within the case management systems that was created, modified, or accessed at any*

*time between 1 May 2020 and 20 June 2023. These searches resulted in over 800,000 items, not all of which were relevant to the Terms of Reference. In an attempt not to overwhelm the Inquiry with 800,000 documents, a further key word search was completed on the initial data set to identify relevant documents to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.*

*A Microsoft 365 search was then completed on all the accounts of the Approved Mental Health Professionals who had direct involvement with VC. The search used the same key words as the initial search, and all resulting documents were then individually reviewed to ascertain which documents were relevant to the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry.*

*As the Inquiry has progressed and new lines of investigation have been explored, the legal team have continued to review documents in its possession to see whether it holds any information which may be relevant to the Inquiry; where such information is considered relevant, it has been disclosed in the event that the Inquiry finds it helpful.*

*NCC is committed to assisting the Inquiry and is attempting to do so by adopting a reactive approach to any new issues.*

**Statement of Truth**

I believe the contents 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 believe of its truth.

Signed: ..... **GRO-B** .....

Date: .....11 May 2026.....

**Index to the First Witness Statement of Andrew Neil Clarke**

| <b>Inquiry URN</b> | <b>Document Description</b>                 |
|--------------------|---|
| INQY0000032        | Rule 9 (3) request dated 28 October<br>2025 |