

Witness Name: James Pykett

Statement No: WITN0479001

Date: 24/07/2026

THE NOTTINGHAM INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF JAMES PYKETT

I, James Pykett of Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG will say as follows: -

1. I am a CCTV Operator employed by Nottingham City Council ("the Council").
2. I make this statement in response to the Rule 9 request from the Nottingham Inquiry ("the Inquiry") dated 30 June 2026. It provides details of my role and involvement in events on the morning of 13 June 2023.
3. Where the content of this witness statement is within my personal knowledge it is true. Where it outside of my personal knowledge and derived from other sources it is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Introduction

4. I am a night shift CCTV Operator at the Woodlands CCTV Control Centre and have been employed by the Council for approximately 7 or 8 years. Prior to this, I was employed by a third-party contractor who were responsible for managing the CCTV control room on the Council's behalf.
5. There are four desks in the CCTV control room. Each desk is allocated a region of Nottingham, for instance, one desk may cover the City Centre, and another will cover the cameras in the south of Nottingham. Usually, one person will cover each desk in the control room. Each desk will have a police

radio and a phone; these are also location specific to a region in Nottingham and so the police radio on the city centre desk will be dialled into the police talk group that is relevant to the city centre.

6. I work the night shift, and I start my shift by taking a handover from the dayshift operator whose desk I am taking over from. The handover will detail any issues with any CCTV cameras that are associated to that desk, any incidents that have happened and/or are ongoing, and any outstanding requests from the police. After the handover, I then complete the CCTV camera checks and check that the police radios and phones are working properly. Once all my checks are done, I then monitor the police radio and the CCTV cameras for my desk.
7. I monitor the police radio traffic independently, but the CCTV control room can also receive direct contact from the police via the phones and radio on occasion. The police can contact the CCTV control room via the radio and phones with any requests anytime. It used to be the case that we could liaise back with the police via the phones, but now we can only broadcast on the police radio.
8. During the night shift, I tend to be on the City Centre desk and therefore focus my attention on the CCTV cameras in the city centre. I see the nightlife of the city centre and then around 4:30am people start to enter the city centre for work. My shift ends at 7:00am and I handover to the day shift operator who is taking over my desk. I would inform the day shift operator of any incidents that have occurred, any ongoing incidents, any camera faults, and any camera that are to stay in place.
9. There is a lot of police interaction in this job, and they are probably our main partner. The police have worked with us in the control room for a long time and tend to understand where the Council's CCTV cameras are situated. This means that they can typically make direct requests for access to specific cameras.
10. The police can request live CCTV camera footage via the "follow me" system. This allows us to share live CCTV camera footage directly to the police control

room. Where the police request a copy of the CCTV footage then they should complete an evidence request form. On occasion, the footage can be provided to the police before the request form is received, but this is only in exceptional circumstances. Where there are exceptional circumstances then the police would be required to complete the form as soon as possible.

Events on 13 June 2023

11. I do not recall much from 13 June 2023. I find it difficult to think about and have compartmentalised the events. I believe there were three other operatives on shift. One operative on the alarm receiving desk, another on the car park desk, and then Jayne Harvey and I were covering the CCTV across the city.
12. Jayne and I had experienced some issues with some of the cameras across the city. I cannot recall exactly which cameras were affected but remember that the issue was operating the cameras. Whenever we tried to move the direction of the camera, it would spin out of control and could not be managed properly.
13. A new system had also been introduced which re-numbered all the CCTV cameras across the city. I had been working with the cameras for 15 years and knew all the numbers by heart. The number changing was frustrating and had been raised to the managers before 13 June 2023. The new system meant that I was unable to recall exactly which cameras followed on from what and created delays when trying to follow a subject across the CCTV cameras. It was not long after the new number system was introduced that the attacks happened in Nottingham.
14. I can remember hearing the police discussing an incident where two people had been attacked on Ilkeston Road. As soon as Jayne and I heard the police discuss this, we immediately started trying to locate the site of the incident. I also remember the police referring to the two victims having been robbed. Jayne displayed the CCTV camera for Ilkeston Road. Due to the curvature of the road and various street furniture, the attacks were not visible on the CCTV camera.

15. Jayne and I then started looking at the other CCTV cameras in the city to try and locate the suspect, now known to be VC. The police provided a description of VC and said that they were looking for a black male dressed in all black. Unfortunately, the police provided no information regarding VC's direction of travel and so we reviewed the CCTV cameras that formed a radius from Ilkeston Road and working outwards.
16. Jayne and I searched the cameras but were unable to locate VC. We were taking each camera live and trying to see if anyone was visible that matched VC's description.
17. Later in the morning, the police broadcasted that there was an incident where a stolen van was driving through the city. At the time, this was discussed as a separate incident and was not directly linked to the attacks on Ilkeston Road. I recall Jayne locating the van on Milton Street but struggle to recall anything that was said on the police radio. Jayne was then following the van in real time, and this is when the new camera number system became an issue. She was having difficulty following the van without delay due to the new numbers and not being able to recall them off by heart.
18. I left my desk and used the large wall of monitors to identify which CCTV camera followed on from the CCTV camera Jayne was currently observing. The wall of monitors displays all the CCTV cameras across the city and on each display, the camera number and location are visible in the corner. I could then identify which CCTV camera Jayne needed to be able to follow the van across the city.
19. On 13 June 2023, Jayne was following the van and broadcasting the CCTV footage to the police via the "follow me" system. As Jayne was following the van and its direction of travel, I was identifying the camera number of the next camera in VC's direction of travel. I would read the number out loud to Jayne, who would then bring the camera up to try and give the police a seamless view of VC driving through the city.
20. Jayne and I worked as a team to follow the van across the CCTV cameras. The new CCTV camera numbers may have slowed us down slightly, but we

did manage to follow the van properly across the CCTV. If the Council had not changed the CCTV camera numbers, then Jayne could have probably followed the van unassisted. It is unlikely that I would have been trying to load the CCTV cameras at the same time as Jayne due to delays that it can cause when two people try to access the same camera at the same time.

21. It is disappointing that the CCTV camera on Bentinck Road could not be properly operated at the point of VC's arrest. I understand that this would have been helpful for the police in their case against VC and it is frustrating that we were unable to capture that footage for them.
22. The police did not direct the search for VC. On hearing details of the incident over the police radio, we started our own searches for VC.
23. The horrific events of 13 June 2023 remain with me to this day. Everyone in the control room understands the importance of the police's work and wants to do everything possible to help protect the public.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the content of this witness 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

Date: 24/07/2026 .