

Statement by the Chair

1. I want to reassure everyone that this Inquiry is open for business. A significant amount of work has been completed in relation to the review I commissioned on my appointment. Today, I am setting out my strategy for ensuring this Inquiry delivers against its Terms of Reference, making meaningful recommendations for change within a reasonable time-frame.
2. There has been significant comment and concern expressed about the Terms of Reference for this Inquiry - that they are too broad, that they are impossible to fulfil, and that the Inquiry will be unable to complete its work in less than 10 years.
3. I believe that the Terms of Reference for this Inquiry are necessary and deliverable. The purpose of this statement is to explain why I believe this and to explain how the Inquiry will approach its work under my chairmanship.
4. I disagree with those who say we should not consider what happened in the past. This is a necessary part of our work. Lessons have to be learnt from institutional failures and any cover-ups which have come to light, and only in this way can we look to the future with confidence. I have to say that I regard calls for us to forget the past with a high degree of scepticism, not least because some institutions may have the most to hide and a vested interest in not turning a spotlight on what happened in the past.
5. I believe that the concerns that our Terms of Reference cannot be delivered are founded on an assumption that we must seek to replicate a traditional

public inquiry in respect of each of the thousands of institutions that fall within our remit. We will do so for some, but we would never finish if we did it for all.

6. The way I want to approach the Terms of Reference is to make sure that we present recommendations for improved identification, prevention and response to child sexual abuse. We will base this on a thorough analysis of historic incidents, current ways of working and emerging best practices.
7. I have a clear strategy for how we achieve this and conclude the Inquiry. Alongside our work to uncover the failures of the past, we need a sharper focus on developing our recommendations for future change. Today I am announcing how we will do this.
8. The overall approach is intended to fulfil the commitment I made on my appointment - to ensure that the Inquiry is driven forward with pace, confidence and clarity. By doing so, the Panel and I believe that we can make substantial progress towards completing the Inquiry by the end of 2020.
9. Throughout this process, the views of all those affected by the Inquiry's work will be sought and taken into account. I know they may not always support the decisions we make. The Inquiry will scrupulously preserve its independence from all parties, applying its best judgement without succumbing to undue influence from any person, group, special interest or institution.

Sharpening our focus

10. Past inquiries into single institutions or single sets of circumstances have not had the chance to consider the underlying issues which have led institutions

to fail children across England and Wales. I believe our Terms of Reference ask us to build on their work but do something different.

11. We will adopt a thematic approach that, alongside our work to hold institutions to account, ensures we are focused on the fundamentals relevant to the thousands of institutions across our remit. Moreover, this focus ensures that our task is manageable. That is why I believe that our Terms of Reference are necessary and deliverable.

12. We need a clear focus on the truly big changes required across institutions in England and Wales. This ensures that our findings and recommendations are widely relevant and that no institution can avoid the reach of this Inquiry. To do this, we will align the elements of this Inquiry across four major themes:

- a. Cultural - examining the attitudes, behaviours and values within institutions which prevent us from stopping child sexual abuse;
- b. Structural - examining the legislative, governance and organisational frameworks in place, both within and between institutions;
- c. Financial - examining the financial, funding and resource arrangements for relevant institutions and services; and
- d. Professional and political - examining the leadership, professional and practice issues for those working or volunteering in relevant institutions.

13. We will remain vigilant for other issues which may arise, and maintain the necessary forensic rigour and procedural fairness throughout. This framework, however, will provide the right basis for planning, prioritising and delivering the forward-looking part of the Inquiry's work.

14. Our projects - Public Hearings, Research, and Truth - do not stand alone as separate strands of work. All of them will make crucial contributions to the whole Inquiry. When considered together they will not only enable us to make far-reaching recommendations for change. They will also capture the scale of child sexual abuse across England and Wales so that those recommendations address the entrenched issues that have impeded reforms or allowed child sexual abuse to continue.

15. The internal review I commissioned is proceeding. If we form the view that changes to our existing investigations might be necessary, we will ask the relevant Core Participants for their views before any decisions are taken. If there are other substantial changes to the Inquiry's work which we think will directly affect others, we will seek their views. I expect to provide an update on progress in the next few weeks.

16. As I said earlier, we are not pausing our work. We will hold our first Inquiry Seminars on 29 - 30 November on the civil justice system and criminal compensation schemes. This will be the first in a series of Inquiry seminars and these will be key to shaping our recommendations for the future.

17. The development of the Truth Project will continue and by the end of October we will publish our first report of the sessions held so far. I am very grateful to those brave victims and survivors who have shared their experience with the Inquiry. It has been a great privilege to have been involved in some of those sessions. I am heartened by the feedback we have received from those who

have participated about how they have been helped by contributing in this way.

18. I am also committed to ensuring that we are more visible and accessible in our work. The Panel and I are speaking regularly at events around England and Wales and I am looking forward to the official opening of our Wales office on 26 October.

Professor Alexis Jay

17 October 2016