

IN THE SURREY CORONER'S COURT

BEFORE HM SENIOR CORONER FOR SURREY, MR RICHARD TRAVERS

IN THE MATTER OF THE GUILDFORD PUB BOMBINGS 1974

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INQUESTS TOUCHING AND CONCERNING THE DEATHS OF:

- (1) MR PAUL CRAIG (DECEASED)**
- (2) GUARDSMAN WILLIAM FORSYTH (DECEASED)**
- (3) PRIVATE ANN HAMILTON (DECEASED)**
- (4) GUARDSMAN JOHN HUNTER (DECEASED)**
- (5) PRIVATE CAROLINE SLATER (DECEASED)**

JUNIOR COUNSEL NOTE OF PRE-INQUEST REVIEW HEARING

16th July 2021

1. Abbreviations

1.1

- 3.9 HMC noted that there was a large amount of work still to be done in processing material for disclosure and preparing for the inquests. This meant that work could progress whilst any developments in the legal aid position were awaited. If at a subsequent point public funding was made available and KRW Law wished to have more time in order to catch up with the progress that had already been made in the preparation for the inquests, then that could be the subject of an appropriate application at that time.
- 3.10 Fiona Barton QC confirmed that Surrey Police supported the families of the Deceased being granted access to public funding in these inquests, but that work preparing for the inquests could continue whilst that issue was pressed. Counsel for the MPS and the MOD did not have any submissions to add to what had been said.
- 3.11 HMC concluded that it would be a mistake to cease work, and the application would be refused. He confirmed that he had been asked by KRW Law to write a letter in support of its application (on behalf of the family of Ann Hamilton) for access to legal aid (and in support of the families generally being granted legal aid), and he had done so. He had recently been asked to reiterate his position, which again he had done, but he emphasised that legal funding was not in the Coroner's gift and he was not able to do more.

Witnesses

- 3.12 CTI noted that once the bulk of disclosure had taken place, the next main issue on the horizon was the selection of witnesses to give evidence at the inquest hearings.
- 3.13 As part of Batch 1, statements from 196 witnesses had been disclosed. They had been categorized according to a green, amber and red code (green signifying the most important witnesses, down to red signifying those not likely to be necessary). CTI indicated that if

traced. Once that had been done, there would be a clearer understanding

3.19 HMC confirmed that he could see that if other agencies had pensions information, that

3.24 CTI noted that the issues of empanelment of a jury and the potential admission of findings of the May Inquiry under Rule 24 of the Coroners Rules had been floated for discussion at a future PIR.

3.25 Finally, CTI noted that work was still being done in relation to a dedicated website for these inquests, pursuant to HMC's ruling on media access of 14th September 2020. Surrey County Council had agreed to host a webpage which could hold a selection of documents to be made available publicly. However, delay had been encountered due to the fact that Surrey County Council was subject to regulatory requirements relating to the accessibility of all documentation hosted on its webpages, and it was necessary to consider whether the documents proposed for uploading met the accessibility requirements imposed by the regulations. CTI noted that HMC's junior counsel was to undergo training in order to facilitate the provision of compliant documents for uploading to the website.

4. Next steps

4.1 HMC noted that the next PIR was listed for 8th October 2021, with a further PIR listed for 14th January 2022.

MATTHEW FLINN

31st August 2021