



**The Sheku Bayoh Public Inquiry**

**Witness Statement**

**Marie McGowan**

**Taken by [REDACTED] by MS Teams**

**On 29 November 2022**

**Witness Details**

1. My full name is Marie McGowan. My date of birth is 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. I'm an Enquiry Desk Assistant I have been an Enquiry Desk Assistant for 20 years. I am based at Kirkcaldy Police Office. I have worked at various police stations in Fife, mainly Kirkcaldy but also Glenrothes.
3. PIRC never approached me for a statement and I am not sure why.

**3 May 2015**

4. On 3 May 2015, I started my shift around 13:30pm and I entered KPO through the back door and walked through the canteen. I remember the canteen being busy with people and wondering why because it is not usually busy like that. I don't recall who was in the canteen. I didn't stop and speak to anyone who was

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in the canteen and I do not recall anything that was said because I was just walking through it to start my shift.

5. I have been asked who told me about the incident. It was Lorraine Dewar told me about the incident when I came to work that day. There is usually a crossover on shifts when I start, so on 3 May 2015 I worked alongside Lorraine Dewar for a short time. We usually receive a handover from the person that was working the morning shift.
6. I did not speak to anyone else about the incident. I did not speak to any of the officers involved in the incident.
7. I have been asked how well I knew the members of Team 4 in 2015. I worked for team 5 but also worked for team 4 due to the crossover of shifts.
8. I cannot remember what the weather was like that day.

**Kirkcaldy Police Station CCTV**

9. I have been told that there is CCTV footage that shows me leaving the enquiry desk on a number of occasions and I have been asked what was that for. This would have been to carry out my normal duties. We don't sit at the front desk the full time. Our computers are in the room behind the enquiry desk and that is where I was mostly on 3 May 2015. I cannot remember who was all working in that room that day but the incident on 3 May 2015 was no discussed.
10. I have never been shown the KPO CCTV or PIRC Transcripts. I am aware that there are cameras are in KPO and that they record both visual and audio recordings.

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**PIRC Statement, PIRC-00368 – Lorraine Dewar, 28.11.15**

11. In my role as an enquiry office assistant I complete PNC and CHS checks on persons and on some occasions vehicles. I received training on both of those police computer systems and as such was granted access because they are necessary for my role.
12. I have been asked about PNC checks. If you were checking PNC for a person, PNC would you let you know if they had been reported missing, if they had any outstanding warrants, if you were a disqualified driver. It would also have some previous records on that. For CHS, that would tell you if they were a registered sex offender, if they were a firearms holder, if they had any bail conditions set by the court. But you wouldn't, on CHS, you wouldn't know if someone had a warrant; you would have to look at PNC. if you were get a request to check PNC for instance, you usually have to give a reason but, even if you didn't put a reason in the box, it would still bring up, basically, the results for instance. You had referred to, again, correct me if I'm wrong, but kind of like a book, or something that if someone was to say, "Why did you put that in?" there was a way that you were able to log it, or who had requested the check. For PNC, you do have to put a reason or it wouldn't work. What we also do is we put in the shoulder number of the officer requesting the check and our own shoulder number as the person accessing but, if you miss out one of those shoulder numbers, you can still access, and that's when you would be audited to say, "Who authorised--" you know, "Who were you doing this on behalf of?" You would still need the reason.
13. It comes live over the radio usually, with checks, because people are out on the street, so they would radio back for the check. You would note it down because if you typed it in yourself and it didn't. So you note it down, so we all, in the enquiry office have a book, and we update it, the page, when we start each day. So I can go back on my book and say, on that day, I checked on that person before

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14. I have been asked how often I would be audited for doing those checks and who would carrying out the audit back in 2015. I'm not sure who audits it. I think it would be whoever controls PNC within the organisation would be the one auditing it, and I don't know how they do it. I don't know if it's random. I don't know how it's done. I only know that at my end, if I got audited, I would get it in, not an email, but through internal post. I would get a sheet of paper saying "On this date, at this time, you checked out this person. Please tell us who authorised, who you did it for." So I would either refer a call card if it was an ongoing incident, and maybe I hadn't been requested directly by a cop, but was helping out with the incident because it was busy. Sometimes they need five, six person checks. Control will say, "I'll do three, you do three" at that time. So I would write them in my book, check them out, and things like that. If I hadn't put a shoulder number, I would maybe get an audit sheet through to see what happened. I would then say "refer to the call card".

15. I have been asked if prior to 2015, I have been asked to do a check and not been given a reason for it. I don't think I've been in that position, but we're very careful with that. I think everybody realises the importance of security of the systems like that, and I have had people phone me from when they used to do PIRC inquiries in Kirkcaldy, and they were all up the stairs. They would phone down for whatever reason and say "Can you do me a check?". I would phone them back to ensure they were who they said. I can't just do this off a phone call. So I would phone them back and say "Oh, somebody just phoned me from this number for a check, say it was such-and-such" and they've confirmed "Well, that's right. He is here, blah blah blah." So, nobody, I don't think, would ask you to do it without a reason.

16. If an officer is dealing with a crime, they'll create a crime file, and that is basically, explaining who the person is, what the charge is, what the MO is. That is what sort of gets sent to the fiscal if you like, to see if they're going ahead with that. So that's the crime file, that generates a crime file number. So the

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crime file number will show up on CHS, and if there's a court case, it will have the fiscal number and a crime file, a CN reference, we call it. So it's linked in that sense, but some of them would never make it to CHS if there's no convictions etc.

17. I have been asked if it wasn't ongoing and it was a case in the past, would it still come up. It shouldn't come up on CHS because it's not but it would still be on the actual crime file, and because that's one of the ways that. If somebody comes in asking about something they've been involved in, like, if it was somebody that came in and said "Oh, I think I got my shed broken-into last year. Do you know what's happened?" I would look on Crime File at what was happening.

**PC Brian Geddes' account**

18. I have been told that PC Brian Geddes' stated to PIRC in his statement (PIRC-00355 at Page 3):-

*"Within the Enquiry Office there is a static airwave terminal, which in general is switched on, allowing everyone within the office to hear what is being transmitted. You can hear both sides of any transmitted conversations."*

19. I would agree with that. I cannot recall whether or not PC Geddes was in the area that I was working in that day. I didn't speak to PC Geddes about the incident.

20. I have been asked about call cards. When a member of the public phones in, regarding anything, a call card is created. If it's related to Kirkcaldy, it would be sent to the Kirkcaldy filter, if you like. So it's just one filter where it's everything related to Kirkcaldy. That shows you who's phoned it in or, if it's anonymous, the number that they've phoned it from, and the incident they're reporting. There's then a body of text, where the call taker would put down what the

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person had said. That would get sent to the controller. The controller would then allocate the officers to go to that card. I could visually see that card with my screen. It will come up on my screen. It would be a row, rows of all the call cards, and I would see-- there's a column where I would be able to see if the call card had been actioned, if people were attending, if it was resolved, if the officers were away. It also shows you the badge numbers of the officers who are sent to it. So it's a live record, if you like. Enquiry desk assistants have access to the call cards and , I think sergeants and inspectors have access. It's called STORM. The system the sergeants and inspectors for the inquiry office, would have access, and I'm not sure about courts. I think they do now. I don't know if they did then because we've got STORM Unity now. We didn't have that then, so I don't think they did have access then.

21. Lorraine updated me that the call cards had been restricted and I have been asked what this means. So it would still show up on the list in front of me, but just have a line saying "restricted". So I would know the call card was there, I would know the number of the call card, but I would be unable to access any information from it. It would be posted until the incident is finished or we took it out of that filter and put it elsewhere.

22. I think the only people that have access to restricted call cards are the people who restrict them, and I think you can name a person in the past if you've heard. Because, when a call card gets restricted, usually everything associated with that, like, the crime file, if there was one, was also be restricted. If there was any custodies involved in that, they would also be restricted, so it would be everything. So the only people that have access to them would be, I think. I know on crime file, the only person that has access is the reporting officer, and whoever restricts them obviously has access.

23. Prior to 2015, it wasn't rare for call cards be restricted but it wasn't common. It wasn't an everyday event. It would happen now and again, but not every day.

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**Treatment of Sheku Bayoh’s Family and Friends**

24. I have been told that I dealt with Martyn Dick and Kirsty Macleod (18:15:37 KPO Camera 13) but I don’t recall this.

25. I have been told that I also dealt with Zahid Saeed’s father, Mr Ahmed (18:33:24 KPO Camera 13). I think I do recall someone coming and saying that they need access to their house, and I said “Well, until the police have finished, I can’t do anything about it”.

26. I have been told that I dealt with Chris Lees (18:49:40 KPO Camera 13) but I do not recall this.

27. I have been asked if I recall Sgt More’s interaction with Mr Ahmed but I do not.

28. I have been told that the PIRC Timeline at 18:49:40 onwards says:-

*“At this time raised voices can be heard coming from the direction of the door opposite the public enquiry desk.”*

*“Raised voices can still be heard coming from the direction of the door directly opposite the public enquiry desk.”*

29. I do not recall any of this.

**Enquiry Desk**

30. I have been asked where does the door directly opposite the Enquiry Desk lead to. It has a set of stairs and leads to meeting rooms. It is not possible to access the canteen from this door.

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31. I have been asked about the customers at KPO in general. A variety of people come in to sign on if they have bail conditions to sign on, foreign nationals come in to sign on. People, sometimes it's arranged, if they're getting statements noted, officers will arrange for them to come into the office. You'll get members of the public coming in, just to report things. They feel it's quicker. I'll just go to the police station, as opposed to phoning. You just get a whole variety of various things. If people are in custody, you'll get people related to custodies coming in, just a variety.

32. I have been asked if someone doesn't ring the bell, how do I know if anyone is in the enquiry desk area. There's a big screen on the wall, which is divided into screens. So you'll have a screen of the front office so you can see people coming in because, as I say, we're working in that little area. So we could see that, and it used to show the backyard of the custodies coming in so you could see the van coming in. So there was about four screens on it at that time. so that everybody in that area is able to see it. It's just visual though, there isn't any audio.

33. I have been asked if someone was to come to the front desk and they didn't ring a bell, how would I know that anybody was there. There wasn't any kind of other notification or anything. You'd usually see because the sort of screen's there, you would eventually go, "Oh, there's someone there." You would go in as soon as you saw them there.

34. I have been asked how I would you communicate with someone that doesn't speak English. If someone doesn't speak English and you can't find out what language they speak, you can phone. It's like, a three-way phone call. If I ask them the language, I'll phone them up, and say, "I'm looking for someone that speaks this language." Then they will put them on the phone. I'll hand the phone to the member of the public and then they'll give it back, and it's run that way

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35. If they're not able to understand our question of "what language do you speak?" we've got a sheet, and we would show them the sheet, for them to point to their language. That has been in place prior to 2015.

36. I have been asked how I communicate with someone showing signs of mental health and whether or not I received any training. I don't recall getting any training at that time regarding people with mental health, although we are aware of people with mental health. I think if somebody had come in who appeared to be having any kind of episode, I would probably get a sergeant or someone.

**Media**

37. I have been told that the press got information that a female police officer had been stabbed in Kirkcaldy on 3 May 2015. This is the first of me hearing about that now. I did not speak to anyone from the press. I am not aware of anyone else speaking to the press.

38. I have been asked about the approach we take at KPO to the media. I haven't experienced anyone from the media calling to say that they've heard about an incident and trying to get more information. I think all the calls would come through the call centre, so I don't know if they would get to us unless someone did have a direct number. We are not given any training on dealing with the press.

**Race**

39. I have been asked what is the racial makeup of the people I see coming in from the public and to the cells. It's a lot, a whole load of different, it's predominantly white, I would say but, no, there's a lot of other ethnicities come in because, as I say, we register foreign nationals here and the Home Office have them sign in here weekly, two-weekly, monthly. So we get a lot of different races, creeds, everybody

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40. Prior to May 2015, I have been asked what training I have carried out relating to equality and diversity. I think there's always been something within the training, regarding-- I don't think back then they called it equality and diversity, but yes. I don't think there was a specific course, if you like, but I think just in basic communications you would have to go over-- and I do remember, yes, I did do a course long before then and it was how to deal with minorities, and it covered race. It covered people who were blind, people who had physical disabilities. It generally covered all of that. That was a lot of years ago, I do remember that. It was provided by Police Scotland because it was held at Headquarters. It was mandatory, I think.

41. We get some online courses, then you would go through that cover things like diversity. It all depends because you're always getting something. So they would be maybe once a year.

42. I have been asked if I have ever been taught anything about unconscious bias within your training. Not within my training, no.

43. I have never come across any examples of racial discrimination at KPO. I have never come across racist jokes or comments.

44. I have been asked if I came across this in my workplace, how would I respond. I would tell them I was offended, and I think people know then that you can't say things. You can think what you like. You can't say things in front of people, because if somebody said anything racist or biased in front of me, I would say, "I don't like that" and I think they know the consequences of upsetting someone like that. So I don't see it, no. If I thought it was dealt with, I would keep it between myself and the person. If I thought it was a pattern that the person was doing to other people as well, I would report it, yes.

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45. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that this statement may form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry's website.

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