

B65 2538

Carson R (Rona)

From: Edgar R (Rachel)
Sent: 28 June 2006 20:58
To: Minister for Education and Young People
Cc: Deputy Minister for Education and Young People; PS/ED; MacLean CR (Colin); Laing SG (Shirley); Tullis D (Douglas)
Subject: Update on work of Tom Shaw--RESTRICTED--POLICY
Importance: High

Minister,

Cc as above.

We have been working recently with Tom Shaw to address some issues that have arisen in his first update on work on historic abuse (attached below):

- Clarifying his remit, and in particular exploring further the issue of individuals who have experienced abuse and who wish to meet with him or submit evidence
- Addressing a mixed response to his questionnaire from local authorities;
- Identifying the relevant legislation and guidance in place in the period 1950 to 1995.

On the first issue, we have confirmed the intention that "child abuse" is interpreted broadly and his general interpretation of the remit. The challenging issue is the one about contact with individuals. You will recall that the remit limits him to contact with organisations representing the interests of survivors. However, INCAS now seems to have imploded and the only other significant survivor organisation is one that only represents those who were cared for by Quarriers. We have explored whether other voluntary organisations might be able to fill the gap, but not been able to identify an organisation that could really fulfil this role. Following further discussions with Mr Shaw, he has developed a proposal (attached below) for how he might have contact that would assist his review without becoming overwhelmed with lengthy meetings with survivors. In essence, this involves a series of meetings with a mechanism for limiting the number if he is overwhelmed with requests. Following discussion with OSSE, I believe this is a reasonable compromise that will help him to identify information that will not necessarily be available from written records and allow him to check with survivors their experience of the systems while not creating an expectation that he will meet indefinitely with all survivors who wish to spend time with him. Although such meetings will inevitably be time-consuming, the proposal would allow him to focus discussions and the collection of information and identify those who are most likely to assist his work.

On the second issue, we have facilitated a meeting between ADSW and Mr Shaw and a way forward has now been identified, involving local authority archivists identifying some of the information he requested. Mr Shaw is content with this solution.

On the third, we have agreed that a university research assistant will assist him with this task over the next 6 weeks. Archivists from the local authorities have also agreed to check that the list he is compiling contains all the relevant legislation and guidance of which they are aware.

Although the review has made slower progress than originally anticipated, it does now appear that significant progress has been made and that the review is achieving the cooperation it requires. Although there is still some suspicion among survivors, the proposal above should help secure further confidence from a significant number of survivors, although there will inevitably be some who will not be content whatever the outcome.

I should be grateful if you could confirm that you are content for Mr Shaw to have direct contact with individuals on the basis described and indicate whether you would like to meet him later in the summer so that he can advise you on progress.



Progress Update
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Rachel Edgar

Rachel Edgar
Head of Looked After Children and Youthwork Division
Education Dept
VQ 2-B46
ext. [REDACTED]