

"It is clear from recent criminal convictions that some children were abused in Scottish residential care homes in the past. These young people deserve a full apology for what happened to them. They should not have been abused. Such abuse of vulnerable young people whenever or wherever it took place is inexcusable/unacceptable. Let's be thankful but not complacent that there is now a greater awareness in society that such abuse of young people can happen. It is that recognition of the potential for abuse that has led to alterations to the statutory and regulatory structure in which establishments operate. But simply changing the legal framework for protection is not enough."

It therefore falls to this generation of Ministers to say quite clearly that where young people were abused when being looked after this was completely unacceptable. That is why I want to take the opportunity today to apologise on behalf of the people of Scotland to those people who were subject to such abuse and neglect; who did not receive the level of care and support that they deserved. Others will also want to consider whether they ought to apologise for any abuse which took place in the homes for which they, or their predecessors, were responsible.

This abuse should never have happened and I share with others profound sorrow for the damage experienced by individuals. We are committed to minimising the risk of abuse to children and young people currently in residential establishments in Scotland. That is why we are ensuring that inspection, regulation and standards are in place to prevent, detect and deal with abuse. And we are anxious to do the right thing by the survivors of past abuse. That is why officials are continuing to explore with the In Care Abuse Survivors Group a range of matters where we can better support survivors and gain from their insights and experiences as we continue to develop our policies. There will be a Committee debate in Parliament on 1st December when Peter Peacock will set out how the Executive plans to deal with the issues raised by the petitioner."

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Laing SG (Shirley)

From: Laing SG (Shirley)
Sent: 18 November 2004 14:54
To: MacLean CR (Colin)
Cc: McKinlay FE (Fiona)
Subject: RE: I; ADVICE ON PETITION PE 535

Colin, I agree. No word yet from Court Division so not sure if this will be the final version or not. I will give it until cop tonight to see if they come back with any more amendments before sharing the text with the Minister's office but I will alert David now to the way this seems to be moving.

Shirley

-----Original Message-----

From: MacLean CR (Colin)
Sent: 18 November 2004 13:33
To: Laing SG (Shirley)
Subject: RE: I; ADVICE ON PETITION PE 535

If this is what the final version looks like – it might be worth letting PP see it. My first impression is that it reads stronger than the version you and I prepared, and might lead PP / FM to reconsider their position?

Colin

-----Original Message-----

From: Donnelly LM (Louise)
Sent: 18 November 2004 13:00
To: Laing SG (Shirley); Nelson G (Gillian)
Cc: MacLean CR (Colin); Henderson RM (Richard) (Solicitor); Layden P (Patrick); Edgar R (Rachel); McKinlay FE (Fiona); Verrall M (Maureen); McNicoll G (Gordon); Nicoll L (Lindsey)
Subject: RE: I; ADVICE ON PETITION PE 535
Importance: High

Shirley

As discussed with Patrick and Gordon's help I have been doing some revisions to the draft apology **but I have yet to clear** with the Court Division colleagues in B2. We also have still to discuss the questions in your e-mail. But what do you and Colin think of the revised line re apology? We had reservations about talking about "the State" placing children in homes. In places I admit I have roamed into policy lines with my language so feel free to edit that.

Clearly it shouldn't go to the Minister till we've checked that B2 are content but I thought it might be helpful to share this with you, Colin and others in this state at same time as with B2.

Happy to discuss and I will get back to you probably later this afternoon following discussion with Lindsey and Gillian.

Regards

Louise Donnelly

Ext [REDACTED]