

KAX 1/56

**MEETING WITH CATHY JAMIESON TO DISCUSS INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE - 6 JANUARY 2003**

Cathy Jamieson, Minister for Education and Young People  
Colin MacLean, Children and Young People Group  
Bill Gilchrist, Deputy Crown Agent  
Peter Beaton, Civil Justice and International Division  
Ian Fleming, Police Division  
Gerald Byrne, Young People and Looked After Children Division  
Penny Curtis, PS to Ms Jamieson

Ministers are concerned that allegations of institutional abuse in Scotland would continue to trickle out. The Executive should acknowledge the existence of the problem and explore whether we could take a positive role in bringing closure to those affected. The Executive would not want to affect any existing criminal or civil proceedings but allow the subject to be talked about publicly, and perhaps have a forum for victims to recount their experiences. We might also examine counselling (for example, a telephone helpline) and other services for adult survivors.

Possible models from other countries were discussed, including a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (which would include perpetrators) and the Irish model of a confidential forum for accounts to be given in private (should the victim prefer) and a public forum for other complaints. It was important to consider the question of compensation from the outset, in particular whether the Executive would find itself paying compensation in cases that were the liability of others. However, it might be difficult to offer only a sympathetic forum that heard cases in private with no follow up in terms of compensation or apology.

It would be important to engage other organisations involved in these allegations, in particular the Churches, the voluntary sector and local authorities. The Executive might be able to exercise leadership in creating a forum for closure which would also benefit these bodies. They might also contribute to compensation arrangements.

The next steps to be taken were:

- i. to identify the organisations with an interest in this matter;
- ii. to consider how best to approach them;
- iii. to make contact with Quarriers who apparently had already considered such a scheme, and Victim Support Scotland;
- iv. to contact Edinburgh City Council on the follow up to their child abuse inquiry, especially compensation claims;
- v. to provide more information on the Irish compensation arrangements, particularly the source of funds.

ED-YPLAC  
6 January 2003