

**5. We note that you advise on page 146 of your Part C response that there were no policy reviews following any specific investigation. Are you able to advise if any significant or serious case review or internal practice review was carried out after the convictions referred to in your response? If not, why not? If so, are you able to advise us of the lessons learned and shared and provide us with a copy of the findings?**

No and as far as ACC are aware no serious case review or internal practice review was carried out after the convictions referred to. ACC does not know why those reviews were not done.

On this basis ACC have forensically re-evaluated William Alexander's files and those of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who were the children in his care and against whom crimes were committed. ACC herewith submit further evidence to the Inquiry in response to the questions in the Section 21 of the Notice.

ACC recognise that some of the language, references and opinions expressed reflect the social values of that time. The quotations in this response are verbatim and as such original spelling mistakes have been retained.

ACC's current practice around the recruitment, assessment, and supervision of foster carers is included in this response.

#### **William Alexander S1805924**

ACC herewith submit William Alexanders records to the Inquiry see Q5 - 5.8 + 5.13 ACC W Alexander Annex C > Tab 5:

- 01 S1805924 File 1 WAlexander.ocr is the file that would be considered the foster carer file
- 02 S1805924 File 2 WAlexander.ocr criminal justice records postdate his conviction
- 03 S1805924 File 3 WAlexander.ocr criminal justice supervision records including risk assessments
- 04 S1805924 26 01 2022 FPDR W Alexander Full Person Detail Report (FPDR)

It is worth noting that charges were brought against William Alexander in connection to allegations against [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. It is understood that he was not convicted of these.

[REDACTED]

ACC herewith submit [REDACTED] extracted records to the Inquiry see Q5 - 5.8 + 5.13 ACC [REDACTED] Annex C > Tab 6.

File 1 the following pages have been extracted:

- 01 - File 1 pages 413 – 415 hearing report dated 28 12 1995 (breakdown of placement)
- 02 - File 1 pages 422 – 423 profile of the foster carers, [REDACTED] family members and third parties
- 03 - File 1 pages 444 – 450 hearing disposal and an emergency hearing report 28 11 1995 (coming into care)

File 2 the following page has been extracted:

- 04 - File 2 page 285 breakdown of the foster placement after three weeks.

File 3 the following page has been extracted:

- 05 - File 3 [REDACTED] Letter page 41 05 06 2007 letter from [REDACTED] (nee [REDACTED]) to ACC regarding the Alexanders.

In files 1, 2 and 3 there are other allegations of abuse although these are not related to foster carers or [REDACTED] time in foster care. The Children's Rights File has not been shared with the Inquiry as it references a non-related incident albeit when [REDACTED] was in care. Should the Inquiry wish to recover these records ACC welcomes receipt of a S21 Notice to compel ACC to provide them.

Daily logs (55 pages) are from [REDACTED] time at Kincorth Childrens home. These have not been shared with the inquiry as these do not talk to foster care and reference [REDACTED] time at Kincorth Children's home. The Full Person Detail Report (FPDR) has not been shared with the Inquiry as it only references periods of social work involvement for [REDACTED] as an adult.

ACC herewith submit [REDACTED] records to the Inquiry see Q5 - 5.8 + 5.13 ACC [REDACTED]  
Annex C > Tab 7:

01- [REDACTED] File 1 [REDACTED].ocr  
02- [REDACTED] File 2 [REDACTED].ocr  
03- [REDACTED] File 3 [REDACTED].ocr  
04- [REDACTED] Childrens Rights File  
05- [REDACTED] Complaints  
06- [REDACTED] FPDR

### **William Alexander**

William Alexander was arrested in 2005 and subsequently convicted in 2007. In August 2004 complaints of sexual abuse against William Alexander were made by [REDACTED]. In October 2004 ACC undertook to examine the fostering career of William Alexander from 1994-2001 (file 1 page 355 – Memorandum). This examination would consider:

1. Establish the names of children placed with the Alexander family.
2. The times-scales of placements.
3. Any concerns raised by the foster child, relative or anyone else.
4. If there are circumstance to 3 above, what investigation was done and outcomes.

Preliminary Investigation File 1 pages 328-329 'Issues Surrounding Deregistration' speaks to the 2004 allegations and subsequent case file review of children placed with William Alexander, including the difficulties of carrying it out.

Data extracted from [REDACTED] children's rights file and complaints file 12 August 2004 - 20 January 2005 include undated handwritten notes which talk to [REDACTED] raising allegations against W Alexander. These cross reference with W Alexanders records File 1 pages 315 – 317. File 1 pages 315 -355 of W Alexanders records appear to be the partial typed record of handwritten records discovered in [REDACTED] complaints file. The handwritten records held within [REDACTED] complaint file reference a review of childrens records in response to allegations of abuse and are to be read alongside this response.

**Disclosure of convictions**, signed by William Alexander in 1993:

Original Private Fostering Report (File 1, page 199) which was completed by Jill Culter in 1992 in relation to [REDACTED]. The original conviction was mentioned in this report, but it was not felt that this would have risk implications for [REDACTED] as it had been 12 years previously.

**Current practice:** This would have precluded the couple from proceeding as Foster Carers on that basis.

**Original approval as Foster Carer, 1993-1994:**

Form F - Information on Prospective Substitute Parent(s), File 1 pages 61-71

It does state on File 1 page 64 that WA had offences and details found in the corresponding social work report state:

File 1 page 73: "Then in 1979 their relationship came under great strain as Billy was found guilty of Lewd and Libidinous Practices. Billy had picked up a woman in his lorry and had sexual intercourse with her. The woman then made a complaint to the police that the sexual act had been without her consent, and the police arrested Billy. After being interviewed by the police Billy decided to plead guilty to a charge of Lewd and Libidinous behaviour rather than plead not guilty and have to go to court.

File 1 page 74: "Billy can give no clear explanation for his behaviour, stating that it was an isolated incident which he deeply regretted. [REDACTED] was shocked, upset and confused when she found out, but once Billy's court appearance was over they decided to put the incident behind them. None of their children are aware of Billy's police record and it causes Billy great shame to talk about it now. Billy also has three other convictions, two in relation to D.S.S. (1980) and one motoring offence (1981).

These occurred when the family were struggling financially and relate to Billy working while receiving benefit and not taxing his car. Since July 1981 Billy has had a clear record and is in full time employment. Obviously for two years, the couple's relationship was put under great strain, however in 1982 [REDACTED] was born and [REDACTED] and Billy consider [REDACTED] which has now lasted [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to be happy and secure."

**Current practice:** The couple would be required now to be members of the PVG scheme and Billy's conviction would bar him from working with children. From the evidence provided in relation to our processes the requirement of a PVG check and exploration of any previous convictions may well have been raised during our initial discussions, therefore their application would have been ruled out at that stage. If not as the couple had not completed the preparation group (P65) they would also not have progressed at that point. Finally, all potential foster carers have to become members of the PVG scheme. WA's offence would have meant that he would have been barred so even if he had been dishonest at the point of Initial Interview the application would also have stopped, alongside their aversion to any training (see ACC Training Calendar for information on pre- approval mandatory training.)

However, moving on to the exploration of this within the Form F - Information on Prospective Substitute Parent(s) (File 1 pages 61-71) the information indicates that this is directly from the couple, there is no indication that there has been any attempt to have this verified by referees. There is also no analysis of the information. It is discussed only in relation to the impact this had on the couple's relationship, and it is not considered that there may be potential risks to any child/ young person in their care.

**Approval by the Adoption and Fostering Panel on 17 May 1994** (File 1 pages 57-60) but again there is no direct mention of this charge only "They are a family who have not been without their problems but have coped with these and their relationship appears quite strong." They are then approved as permanent carers for [REDACTED]

**Current assessment:** There is no consideration that this could have been an indicator of risk. While we would be clear that this couple would not be approved today any conviction at all would be given due consideration and the implications of what this would mean for any child in their care would be fully explored and analysed within the Form F assessment with clear training, safer caring and risk assessment tools used.

**Foster Carer Review 14 March 1995:**

This review is largely positive with no concerns of note.

**Foster Carer Review 1998:**

Following allegations made by [REDACTED] in August 1998 (see File 1 page 30) ACC undertook a Foster Carer Review (File 1 page 151- 152 'Foster Carer Review, 24.11.1998') into William and [REDACTED]. The review recommended the Alexanders offer placement to another teenage girl – with several 'safeguards' in place. The associated Report for this review is at page 258-259.

**Agreed at review that:**

1. [REDACTED] Mr [REDACTED] Alexander undergo together or separately, work commitments permitting, the 'Choosing to Foster' training course so as to update their knowledge and be very clear about "safe caring".

**Current assessment and practice:** All paperwork for a foster carer review now requires a clear action and training plan, alongside responsibility for each action.

This does not indicate what timescales it is expected for this to be completed and also "work commitments permitting" implies that this is not mandatory. This would not be the case now. It also implies that this is down to the carer rather than a Service expectation – practice expectations now are clearly highlighted within Foster Carer Handbooks, Reviews, Foster Carer Agreements, Action Plans and also CPD folders.

2. "Record accurately the daily events of family and foster children"

**Current assessment and practice:** There is no explanation as to how this would safeguard children. While recording is still required of foster carers this must be signed off by supervising social workers and there is training for Foster Carers on Record and Report Writing.

3. "Children's Registration Officer is actively encouraged to meet with the young people being looked after and will be notified of all new placements - this to be standard practice for all foster carers"

**Current assessment and practice:** This is the only time this is mentioned, there is no further reference to this. There is an implication that previous Review Minutes were not utilised. Now previous Foster Carer Review Minutes are submitted to Foster Carer Reviews to ensure patterns are picked up. We also now have Chronologies for all foster carers, again to ensure that all patterns are picked up.

4. "Carers to be involved in matching process"

**Current assessment and practice:** Again, it is not clear as to why this is felt to safeguard children/young people.

I would also say that the tone of the Review is almost apologetic. There is no sense of challenging practice or again setting clear expectations for the couple which would be the purpose, in part of Foster Care Reviews both undertaken internally and by the Alternative Family Care Panel.

There is mention after the allegation that it was recommended that Mr Alexander not be left in the home alone (this condition is mentioned at File 1 page 227, page 274, page 300, page 334) when there is only one other female teenager in the home – however it is not recorded anywhere in the 1998 Foster Carer Review itself, or a discussion of this or how it would be managed.

#### **Foster Carer Review 1999**

Foster Carer Review, and associated report, 20 May 1999 (File 1, page 172-176)

Alexander's state they can only offer placements to teenage girls.

**Current assessment and practice:** On page 173 it states that the reason for this is their son and other foster child they were caring for did not want to share their room. However, there was no pulling through of previous concerns or allegations, The current use of chronologies and action plans would ensure that questions and practice issues would be raised alongside the stringent use of safe care plans and risk assessments which are used for all children and young people when moving into a foster carers home.

#### **Foster Carer De-Registration 2001**

File 1 page 273:

Following allegations made by [REDACTED] on 23 May 2001. [REDACTED] and the other child in placement were removed from the Alexander's care.

Their registration as Foster Carers was suspended the following day.

Mr Alexander was questioned by police on 26 May 2001

Strategy Meeting held 7 June 2001 (File 1 page 225). Alexanders were told it was not appropriate for them to continue fostering. The meeting noted William Alexander's conviction from 1979 for lewd and libidinous practices, and the allegations from 1998.

#### **Time of de-registration in 2001:**

From Strategy Meeting 07.06.2001 (page 227)

"Pointers identified that should alert [social] workers to carers who may pose a risk to children"

1. Carers who find it impossible to move on from certain basic issues.

**Current practice:** there is agreed supervision of all foster carers, including both partners where practice is explored. These areas of practice are then pulled into an Annual Foster Carer Review. An early Foster Carer Review can be called when there are concerns raised about practice.

2. Carers who avoid mandatory training.

**Current practice:** Mandatory training is expected to be undertaken pre-approval and with subsequent post-approval training expected to be kept up to date. Issues around training is again raised at supervision and at Annual Reviews

3. Carers who keep workers at arm's length.

**Current practice:** There is an expectation that carers will attend supervision, training and Reviews and there is also an expectation of a yearly unannounced visit. This is on top of visits by children/young people's social workers, Children's Rights workers and anyone else involved in the case. It would also be expected to see both foster carers.

4. Reassessment of old convictions may be required in the light of changing societal attitudes and increasing knowledge of perpetrators activities.

**Current practice:** WA's offence would have meant that he would have been barred from fostering, even if he had been dishonest at the point of Initial Interview the application would also have stopped.

#### **Allegations made in 2004**

File 1 page 329 notes 'At the time of the 2004 Allegations it was agreed to undertake a case file review. This was made difficult by the fact that the Alexanders' file did not contain a list of children who had been placed in foster care with them and the list that has been compiled is a "best guess". There were no allegations in any of the children's files reviewed, which were not contained within the Alexander's files, other than recordings of the Alexanders' poor parenting skills.

#### **William Alexander Convictions and ACC Response, 2007**

Preliminary Investigation into Allegations of Abuse in Foster Care includes Chronology of Events, original Disclosure of Convictions, and Briefing Note re William Alexander (File 1 pages 315—337, sent to the Inquiry 31 January 2022) it is undated but post-dates his conviction in 2007.

The Investigation identifies "Issues Requiring Immediate Action" (File 1, page 337)

**Issue:** "The lack of recording on the Alexanders' foster care file made it exceptionally difficult to track which children were placed there"

**Lesson learned by ACC:** "An instruction will be issued which required the social worker of a looked after child to record the fostering relationship on the careFirst record of the child, through the use of the "relationship" field and to close the relationship when the child moves placement of ceases to be looked after."

**Current practice:** any child/young person placed with foster carers have that relationship marked within our recording system CareFirst which can then be pulled into a chronology for both the child/young person and the foster carer

**Issue:** "There is no current policy on routinely renewing Disclosure Scotland checks on foster carers and those living in their household. Whilst a commitment was given to the Care commission following the recent inspection that all foster carers would be disclosure checked every two years, there was no timescale given for completion of this task."

**Lesson learned by ACC** "The A&F Service will be instructed to complete enhanced disclosure checks on ALL foster carers and their households Summary of Report with immediate effect. It is also recommended that all prospective adopters who have an enhanced disclosure older than 2 years be re-checked with immediate effect".

**Current practice:** All of these are now routinely undertaken – however all foster carers are required to undertake enhanced PVG's and those over 16 in the house are required to undertake a disclosure. PVG's are updated every 3 years and Disclosures are updated every 2 years.

#### **██████████, Fyfe or Anderson**

File 1 page 413 page 1 of the hearing report dated 28 12 1995 shows ██████████ address as the Alexander's of ██████████



File 1 page 414 page 2 of the report, section "FOSTER PLACEMENT; [REDACTED] placement has become fairly fraught with [REDACTED] not responding to Mr [REDACTED] Alexander. [REDACTED] spends most of the day in bed and then goes out with a friend often returning home late. At the time of writing [REDACTED] has put her placement in jeopardy by getting extremely drunk and refusing to go back to the house of Mr [REDACTED] Alexander. CONCLUSION; As to the ever changing circumstances and [REDACTED] unwillingness to cooperate with her family, foster carers or myself, I have been unable to complete my assessment and therefore am not in a position this time to forward a recommendation. However, hopefully by the time of the Panel the situation will be more clear and I will be able to make a firm recommendation."

File 1 page 422 – 423 dated 15 12 1995 which is the profile of foster parents W Alexander and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also details pertaining to third parties and family members of [REDACTED]

File 1 pages 444 – 450 Hearing disposal and an emergency hearing reports 28 11 1995 (coming into care).

File 2 page 285 this record sees the breakdown of the foster placement after three weeks. [REDACTED] spent three weeks in foster care prior to moving to Kincorth childrens home 03 01 1996.

File 3 page 41 is a letter from [REDACTED] (nee [REDACTED]) to ACC regarding the Alexander's.  
[REDACTED]

File 2 pages 11-12 is the original complaint made on the 11 August 2004 to [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] also present both being Children's Rights Officer's. The complaint was that [REDACTED] had disclosed to social worker [REDACTED] that she had been abused by William Alexander and that he stated that she should make a complaint but gave no further advice or support. This was raised by [REDACTED] and the matter was asked to investigate. [REDACTED] line manager at the time, [REDACTED] responded after discussing this with [REDACTED] who denied that an allegation was made although [REDACTED] had discussed being unhappy while in care she did not provide further information as to why. [REDACTED] also spoke of [REDACTED] potentially using this to detract from the concerns raised by [REDACTED] in relation to her caring for her son and the impact of unmet needs for [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] previous experience of working with young people was also raised, alongside confidence in his person-centred practice leading [REDACTED] to be confident that [REDACTED] would have followed due process had the allegation taken place. This information was covered in the formal response to the complaint (P4-5) where the complaint was not upheld.

In Pages 15-30 of this file there is evidence of a Chronology of events for William Alexander including all historical fostering placements that the couple cared for. However, this is not dated and there is no evidence to suggest that this was completed in relation to the complaint. There would seem to be two issues from this – the complaint is in relation to [REDACTED] telling her social worker that she had been abused and that this was not acted on. The resulting investigation found in favour of the worker and felt that if he had been told he would have supported [REDACTED] and acted in accordance with the procedure at that time.

#### **CURRENT POLICY AND PRACTICE DOCUMENTS**

ACC herewith submit evidence of current practice to the Inquiry see Q5 - 5.8 + 5.13 ACC Annex C > Tab 4.