

APPENDIX 1: APOLOGIES

Claim No: QB-2019-002850

BETWEEN:

- (1) AZY**
- (2) BXW**
- (3) CVU**

Claimants

- and -

- (1) CHIEF CONSTABLE OF GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE**
- (2) THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS**

Defendants

APOLOGY TO AZY

I write to apologise to you for the failings of Greater Manchester Police in its dealings with you as a victim of child sexual exploitation in Rochdale.

I fully endorse the public apologies issued by GMP Chief Officers in May 2012, November 2013 and January 2020 in response to concerns about, and criticism of, GMP's handling of CSE in Rochdale.

I apologise to you for GMP's failure to record, contemporaneously, any crimes committed against you.

I accept and apologise for the fact that there were missed opportunities to investigate and disrupt those involved in your abuse and that no charges were brought in connection with offences against you.

It is clear that there was more that could have been done in practical terms, for example by GMP making applications to the Magistrate's Court for Sexual Offences Prevention Orders against those involved in your abuse.

Operation Exmoor is a current enquiry being led by a team of specialist GMP detectives dedicated to the investigation of non-recent CSE in Rochdale. A number of offences against you that were disclosed to GMP during Operation Span have now been recorded as crimes under Operation Exmoor.

I fully understand that your complaint is of crimes against you not having been recorded at the time at which disclosures were first made to GMP, by you or by others, and for this I apologise. From GMP's perspective, however, the door will never close on your ability to engage with the Operation Exmoor team should you choose.

I apologise for GMP's failings in recognising your status as a victim of CSE and in the victim care afforded to you.

Having considered your involvement in Operation Span, I believe that you are owed an apology in respect of GMP's failure properly to record its decision-making and to rationalise its contact (and non-contact) with you. I cannot be satisfied that as much information as possible was shared with you by GMP in an appropriate way, at an appropriate time and for this, I apologise. As a victim of CSE you ought to have been at the very heart of GMP's decision-making.

There is today a far better understanding of CSE than there was before the Operation Span trial in May 2012. GMP now fully recognises that victims of abuse may appear to engage in criminality as a result of acting under duress or fear or under a perpetrator's control. You were a victim of CSE and abuse at a young age and I apologise that this was not more clearly recognised by GMP at the material time and that GMP did not do more to protect you, to communicate with you and to afford you the level of victim care that you deserved.

It is a matter of profound personal regret that your childhood was so cruelly impacted by the dreadful experiences which you endured. GMP could, and should, have done much more to protect you and we let you down.

I hope that it will come as some little comfort to know that our confronting our failures in this regard, means that it is altogether less likely that others will suffer as you did. We will strive to keep improving our responses to similarly horrible circumstances, to prevent the same from happening in the first instance and relentlessly pursuing perpetrators so that they can be held fully to account.

Yours sincerely

[To be signed by: Stephen Watson QPM, Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police]

APOLOGY TO BXW

I write to apologise to you for the failings of Greater Manchester Police in its dealings with you as a victim of child sexual exploitation in Rochdale.

I fully endorse the public apologies issued by GMP Chief Officers in May 2012, November 2013 and January 2020 in response to concerns about, and criticism of, GMP's handling of CSE in Rochdale.

From the mid-2000s onwards, GMP officers attended a number of Child Protection Conferences and safeguarding meetings concerning your older sister and you. From mid-2008 onwards, disclosures made in these meetings as well as reports of crime by other victims, indicated to GMP that you were a potential victim of CSE. On 7 August 2008, GMP referred you, your older sister and a number of other children to Rochdale Children's Services.

I fully recognise that at the time you were 13 years old and a vulnerable child. GMP should have acted to protect you at that time, including by making concerted attempts to understand your situation and to find ways to engage with you.

I apologise that GMP missed opportunities to disrupt those involved in your abuse; disruption could well have served to prevent further abuse. More could have been done, in practical terms for example by GMP making applications to the Magistrate's Court for Sexual Offences Prevention Orders against those involved in your abuse.

In February 2009, GMP became aware that you were pregnant, aged 13, and that you intended to terminate the pregnancy. GMP recognised this as an opportunity to gather forensic evidence, identify the father and prosecute him.

I offer a sincere and unreserved apology to you in respect of GMP's communication with you on the matter of the seizure of the terminated foetus.

Whilst the seizure was lawful, a GMP officer should have spoken to you and to your mother, communicated and explained GMP's rationale clearly, and with empathy, and obtained your consent to the intended course of action.

Due to a breakdown of communication between agencies including GMP, you were not informed about the seizure until April 2011 when DC Margaret Oliver told your mother and she in turn asked DC Oliver to explain the position to you. You gave permission to GMP to resubmit the retained DNA material with a sample of your DNA for further scientific examination; this identified Adil Khan and he was convicted of crimes against you in May 2012.

GMP should have taken far better care of you during what must have been an extremely traumatic time. GMP had a moral and ethical duty to you as a child in an appalling situation. That duty went beyond simply taking steps to progress the investigation; as a victim of CSE you ought to have been at the centre of every decision made about you, particularly decisions so potentially traumatic and distressing. I am very sorry that this was not handled in a more sensitive, caring and empathetic way.

GMP contact logs record that on 7 June 2011, your older sister and your mother were informed that charges had been brought against a number of men. Adil Khan was one of those charged, including with offences against you.

Having considered your involvement in Operation Span, I believe that you are owed an apology in respect of GMP's failure properly to record its decision-making and to rationalise its contact with you. In the absence of evidence of decision-making, I cannot be satisfied that as much information as possible was shared with you by GMP in an appropriate way, at an appropriate time.

I apologise that you were provided with insufficient information to understand the process or were not given the opportunity to ask questions; as a victim of CSE you ought to have been at the very heart of GMP's decision-making.

GMP had an important part to play in communicating and explaining decisions to you and in managing your expectations. There is little evidence to show that this was done and I

apologise that you were not afforded the level of victim care that I would expect to have been given to a child in your position.

There is today a far better understanding of CSE than there was before the Operation Span trial in May 2012. In particular, GMP now fully recognises the complexity of the relationship between perpetrators and victims of CSE and abuse.

I am aware that Operation Exmoor, a current enquiry into non-recent CSE in Rochdale led by a dedicated team of specialist GMP detectives, has identified a further five suspects who were never charged with offences against you. There are ongoing, open lines of enquiry to identify other perpetrators. From GMP's perspective the door will never close on your ability to engage with the Operation Exmoor team should you choose.

You were a victim of CSE and abuse at a young age and I apologise that this was not more clearly recognised by GMP at the material time and that GMP did not do more to protect you, to communicate with you and to afford you the level of victim care that you deserved. It is a matter of profound personal regret that your childhood was so cruelly impacted by the dreadful experiences which you endured. GMP could, and should, have done much more to protect you and we let you down.

I hope that it will come as some little comfort to know that our confronting our failures in this regard means that it is altogether less likely that others will suffer as you did. We will strive to keep improving our responses to similarly horrible circumstances, to prevent the same from happening in the first instance and relentlessly pursuing perpetrators so that they can be held fully to account.

Yours sincerely

[To be signed by: Stephen Watson QPM, Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police]

APOLOGY TO CVU

I write to apologise to you for the failings of Greater Manchester Police in its dealings with you as a victim of child sexual exploitation in Rochdale.

I fully endorse the public apologies issued by GMP Chief Officers in May 2012, November 2013 and January 2020 in response to concerns about, and criticism of, GMP's handling of CSE in Rochdale.

Between 2005 and 2009 when you were between the ages of 14 and 17, you came to GMP's attention on a number of occasions. It is clear that many of the matters in respect of which you now complain are not reflected or documented in GMP's records. I cannot therefore provide a very detailed apology addressing the specifics of many of the matters about which you complain.

I apologise for a number of shortcomings in the way in which GMP interacted with you whilst you were a child. I accept and apologise for the fact that GMP should have worked

more closely with partner agencies including by making appropriate referrals and by attempting to divert you away from the criminal justice system where this was possible. I also accept and apologise for the fact that GMP should have looked more carefully at the instances on which you came to GMP's attention.

I apologise for the fact that GMP did not properly recognise your vulnerability as a child and make far better attempts to contextualise your behaviour.

In respect of GMP's response to your reports of vandalism and break-ins at your home address following your involvement in the 2012 trial, a report that you made on 4 July 2014 which amounted to an offence under section 4 of the Public Order Act 1984 appears to have been filed without a proper investigation having been carried out. I am sorry that I can provide no adequate explanation for the closure of that crime.

There is today a far better understanding of CSE than there was before the Operation Span trial in May 2012. In particular, GMP now fully recognises that victims of abuse may appear to engage in criminality as a result of acting under duress or fear or under a perpetrator's control.

You were a victim of CSE and abuse at a young age and I apologise that this was not more clearly recognised by GMP at the material time and that GMP did not do more to protect you, to communicate with you and to afford you the level of victim care that you deserved. It is a matter of profound personal regret that your childhood was so cruelly impacted by the dreadful experiences which you endured. GMP could, and should, have done much more to protect you and we let you down.

I hope that it will come as some little comfort to know that our confronting our failures in this regard, means that it is altogether less likely that others will suffer as you did. We will strive to keep improving our responses to similarly horrible circumstances, to prevent the same from happening in the first instance and relentlessly pursuing perpetrators so that they can be held fully to account.

Yours sincerely

[To be signed by: Stephen Watson QPM, Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police]