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03 August 2014

Mr Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283, Parliament Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

Dear Mr Bain

**Complaint against Basil McCrea MLA**

I wish to submit a formal complaint in relation to Basil McCrea's treatment of his staff and attach said complaint under cover of this letter. I am making this complaint primarily based on accounts related to me by aggrieved individuals who came forward as part of the Carecall process as initiated by me in May this year. The complaints relate to current and former staff members and volunteers who work for me and who did or still do work for either Mr McCrea or NI21. I have been advised by Miss Ashleigh Murray that she is submitting her own complaint through her solicitor, but she does however want me to refer her allegations to you through my complaint and I will attempt to detail them, to the best of my ability, based on her complaint to me on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> May this year.

I trust that the information provided in this document is sufficient to warrant a full investigation into the conduct of Mr Basil McCrea MLA in accordance with your powers under the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (NI) 2011 and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
**John McCallister MLA  
Independent Unionist**

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## **COMPLAINT AGAINST BASIL McCREA MLA**

### **1. Introduction**

- (a) I was first made aware of a number of serious allegations being levelled against my former colleague Basil McCrea as a result of Ms Ashleigh Murray requesting to meet with me in the Newsletter's office on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014. I had previously heard of certain rumours that had been circulating amongst my staff, Mr McCrea's staff and Party staff but had never been formally approached by anyone to investigate or deal with these rumours. I had witnessed several episodes of Mr McCrea mistreating his staff and had personally witnessed his attempts to undermine staff, volunteers and supporters by his apparent obsession with claiming they had a "mental issue", a physical weakness or some other perceived flaw. However, it was when one of my staff was approached by a member of the public who commented to her about an allegation of inappropriate behaviour by Mr McCrea towards a young female intern he had employed, I felt it was necessary to take decisive action in accordance with the advice contained in the Equality Commission's document – *"Sexual Harassment-Managers' Questions Answered"*.
- (b) I spoke with Basil directly on 3<sup>rd</sup> May this year at a barbeque at the house of NI21's then Chairperson, [REDACTED] who witnessed this discussion along with [REDACTED] (then Party Treasurer). I informed Mr McCrea of the rumours and the serious allegations being made and asked for his comments. He was quite firm in his denial, stating he had done nothing wrong yet he then went on to name three possible individuals who could be responsible for the rumours and allegations. The three names he quoted were [REDACTED] (a QUB student intern he had previously employed), Ashleigh Murray and Jacqueline Neglia, two of whom have since come forward and engaged with Carecall. There then followed a concerted effort by Mr McCrea and [REDACTED] to hound individuals in order to find out who might be responsible for the rumours. I initiated the Carecall investigation, statements were taken from a number of individuals who came forward voluntarily and who, up until this investigation had nowhere to take their complaints and it was during this process that the nature and extent of the allegations being made came to light. Unfortunately for the complainants, the Carecall investigation was halted by the new NI21 Party Executive and in order to fulfill my duty of care I was left with no alternative but to pursue the matter through a formal complaint in accordance with The Code of Conduct and Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members as amended and reissued by the Committee on Standards and Privileges for 2013-14.

### **2. Alleged acts of Mr McCrea which I believe have breached the Code of Conduct**

- (a) The alleged acts by Basil McCrea that I believe warrant investigation for a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct are as follows:
- (1) inappropriate sexual behaviour towards current and former staff members amounting to sexual harassment;
  - (2) bullying and harassment in the workplace;
  - (3) misuse/attempted misuse of Office Cost Expenditure

- (4) the taking and possession of voyeuristic photographs of a former female staff member which amounts to sexual harassment.

**3. Inappropriate sexual behaviour amounting to sexual harassment towards staff**

**(a) Miss Ashleigh Murray**

- (1) The allegations refer primarily but are not restricted to Mr McCrea's behaviour towards Miss Ashleigh Murray. Where the allegations refer to Miss Murray, I am repeating what she told me on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 in the offices of the Newsletter. As mentioned above, her solicitor is submitting a formal complaint on behalf of Ms Murray which will support the information in my complaint. I am only able to provide the specific details of which she told me and which I believe amount to inappropriate sexual behaviour towards a member of staff by Mr McCrea in his capacity as a MLA. The information gathered by Carecall supports some of the allegations in this regard; the remainder is based on my knowledge of events as relayed to me by Miss Murray and to which I am willing to swear under oath as being recounted here as a true and accurate reflection.
- (2) Miss Murray was taken on by Mr McCrea as his "Travelling PA" to provide support to him in his capacity as a MLA. She was required to go wherever Mr McCrea went on Assembly business and thus spent an inordinate amount of time with him. Miss Murray stated to me that he frequently would stroke her legs as she sat next to him in his car, would comment on her physical appearance in a sexual manner, would make "sexual advances" towards her and would make demands on her to provide massages to him.
- (3) One particular incident occurred during a "brainstorming" weekend which took place in the La Mon hotel in early April last year. A number of staff and volunteers were participants, some of whom stayed overnight in the hotel. Mr McCrea was booked into a room but Miss Murray, who lives in [REDACTED] and attending the event at the request of Mr McCrea in her official capacity as his PA, was not staying overnight.
- (4) After the formal discussions had concluded for the day a group of participants, including Mr McCrea and Miss Murray, were socialising in the hotel when Mr McCrea asked Miss Murray to go up to his room to retrieve something. At some stage whilst she was in his room Mr McCrea came in, his trousers were down and his genitals were on display. He approached Miss Murray and was able to grab her tights and pull them down.
- (5) Miss Murray made it clear she was unhappy and did not consent to this action. She told him she was not interested in his advances and he stopped. At the time Miss Murray put it down to poor judgement on his part due to his consumption of alcohol but she was and still is somewhat upset by the incident. For clarity with regard to which capacity Mr McCrea was acting in, the Party was not at this time constituted; Mr McCrea could not therefore be acting as Leader but was the Member for whom Miss Murray provided personal administrative support.

(6) Another incident occurred in early April 2013, when Miss Murray was asked by Mr McCrea to accompany him to a dinner meeting, again in her official capacity as his travelling PA. During the meeting Mr McCrea consumed two glasses of wine and at the end, he drove Miss Murray home. During that journey Mr McCrea was groping her legs to the point of distracting him from driving, causing him to swerve all over the road. It was so bad it drew attention to a police car that subsequently stopped him and asked him to submit to a breathalyser test. When asked if he had been drinking, Mr McCrea initially stated he had not; it was only when the policeman produced the breathalyser did Mr McCrea admit that he had taken one glass of wine and not the two. Mr McCrea passed the test and was allowed to proceed.

(b) **Miss Jacqueline Neglia (Referred to by Carecall as Complainant B)**

(1) Miss Neglia was brought over from Canada by Mr McCrea in the early summer of 2013 under a temporary contract of one year to provide administrative support to his office in Parliament Buildings. I became aware of a rumour in April/May of this year that Mr McCrea had allegedly groped Miss Neglia when she accompanied him on a business trip to Cork in August 2013. Mr McCrea was speaking at a Sinn Fein summer school and was also accompanied by [REDACTED] Connor Clements and [REDACTED]. In an email exchange between myself and [REDACTED] she confirms that she "was aware of the allegation". [REDACTED] also confirmed to me during our conversation on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 that such was Mr McCrea's behaviour towards Miss Neglia, she had cause to question the nature of his relationship with her and that he denied that it was anything other than professional.

(2)



4. **Bullying and Harassment in the workplace**

(a) **Ashleigh Murray**

(1) Miss Murray came to the attention of Mr McCrea through his work with the Princes Trust. He was particularly aware of her vulnerability given her background prior to employing her and which has recently been the subject of media attention. He offered her a job when he was part of a Round Table event taking place in Stormont at which Miss Murray was speaking about her background and her involvement with the Princes Trust.

- (2) By Miss Murray's account, the working relationship was fine at the start. He would speak highly of her to others and praise her personally on her abilities and performance. Sometime around April 2013 this changed and he started to ignore her existence. She had been off [REDACTED] for a while and when she came back to work she found all of her responsibilities had been permanently reallocated to a new staff member, Kirsty McClay and Miss Murray was not given anything constructive to do. Word got back to Miss Murray that Mr McCrea had been telling other staff members that she was damaged, unreliable, untrustworthy and dangerous. She was left feeling humiliated and worthless by this. His whole treatment of her changed; he would often shout at her in front of others and would tell her how damaged she was. On at least one occasion his behaviour was so excessively intimidating and aggressive that she started to cry whilst she was trying to work at her computer in the office. This was witnessed by [REDACTED], who was also in the office at the time. He would also threaten her by suggesting that if she ever spoke to anyone about her treatment he would "destroy" her credibility and that no one would believe her because she is "damaged".
- (3) Miss Murray also told me that Mr McCrea had subjected her to excessive and unreasonable monitoring that he did not apply to other staff members. He would follow her or wait at the bus stop in the morning to see what time she was leaving to get the bus; he would hide near the constituency office in Lisburn to see what time she was arriving and worryingly, he tried to enlist others to spy on her.
- (4) I contend that the behaviour outlined above in relation to Miss Murray was an abuse of power by Mr McCrea. It is wholly unreasonable, unacceptable and unjustified and served to create a hostile, intimidating and degrading environment for Miss Murray which amounts to bullying and harassment.

(b) **Karen Tabahe**

- (1) There is sufficient evidence available from the participants of the Carecall process to support the allegations of bullying and harassment of Mrs Tabahe but I would refer you specifically to evidence available through Fiona McAteer, Annette Holden and Jamie Mackrell. I did actually witness one such incident myself which was so bad I had to speak with Mr McCrea privately about his behaviour afterwards.
- (2) The incident happened in April 2013. I was in his office and we were discussing the forthcoming "brainstorming" event to be held in the La Mon hotel. Also present was Fiona McAteer and another staff member whom I can't recall. All of these individuals were Mr McCrea's office staff. At some point during the meeting Mr McCrea completely lost control with Mrs Tabahe. He was shouting extremely loudly right into her face and it was clearly having a very visible effect on not just her but the other staff too. I remember Miss McAteer being particularly shaken by this and I was so concerned for Mrs Tabahe that I spoke with her later to see that she was alright and to apologise on behalf of Mr McCrea for his extremely aggressive, abusive and intimidating behaviour. It is worth noting that shortly after this incident Mrs Tabahe was off work for some considerable time due to work-related stress!



- (3) I contend that the behaviour outlined above and referred to in the statements was an abuse of power by Mr McCrea. It is wholly unreasonable, unacceptable and unjustified and served to create a hostile, intimidating and degrading environment for Mrs Tabahe which amounts to bullying and harassment.

(c) **Nigel Macauley**

- (1) Mr Macauley worked in a dual capacity providing ad hoc research for me and paid for through my OCE and as Party support staff paid for through the FAPP scheme. From the outset Mr McCrea treated Mr Macauley with utter disdain and contempt. He would make derogatory comments about him in front of him and to other staff; he would pointedly ignore his verbal contributions at meetings or discussions or make undermining, patronizing and belittling comments. Mr McCrea made it clear to all the staff, volunteers and the Party Executive that he personally disliked Mr Macauley and would not even attempt to hide this fact. It made it extremely uncomfortable for Mr Macauley and others in the office as it created an atmosphere of tension and intimidation. He told me about an incident that when I had rung him on one occasion and he was in a meeting with Mr McCrea, Mr McCrea had been particularly aggressive and personally insulting. Mr Macauley told me and my staff member Annette Holden that he felt humiliated by Mr McCrea's behaviour and it undermined his confidence and ability to perform his duties satisfactorily.
- (2) I contend that the behaviour outlined above in relation to Mr Macauley was an abuse of power by Mr McCrea. It is wholly unreasonable, unacceptable and unjustified and served to create a hostile, intimidating and degrading environment for Mr Macauley which amounts to bullying and harassment.

5. **Misuse/Attempted misuse of Office Cost Expenditure (OCE)**

- (a) Miss Murray advised me that she was aware of an attempt by Mr McCrea to obtain cash from his OCE account by deception. I am unsure of the date of this occurrence but it relates to the employment of Jamie Mackrell. Mr Mackrell was employed by Mr McCrea to work in his office based in Parliament Buildings. The means of the deception was by authorising a pay increase to Mr Mackrell on the understanding that Mr Mackrell would then return that increase in cash directly to Mr McCrea.
- (b) Miss Murray also informed me that she herself may have inadvertently been involved in a scheme undertaken by Mr McCrea similar to that as for Jamie Mackrell. Miss Murray was first paid on a fortnightly basis via cheque which was arranged by [REDACTED] in Mr McCrea's Dromore constituency office. On the occasion in question, Mr McCrea was going on holiday and Miss Murray was due to receive her pay which she wanted before he left. Prior to leaving he gave Miss Murray a cheque made out personally to her in her name. The amount was for just over £500. Understandably she presumed this was pay she was owed so once the cheque cleared she spent it. When he returned from his holiday Mr McCrea demanded the money back. He arranged for Suzanne Chalkley, to whom he had delegated management responsibility for his office staff, to collect £50 a week in cash from Miss Murray which was then to be given to him. Miss Murray was also forced to set up a standing order with her bank to pay £100 directly into Mr McCrea's account.

**6. The taking and possession of voyeuristic photographs of a former female staff Member amounting to sexual harassment**

- (a) The relevant photographs are of Miss Jacquelyn Neglia. Whilst the photographs might seem innocuous, it is the fact that they were taken without the subject's knowledge, stored on a computer that she subsequently had access to through her employment with Mr McCrea and the effect this had on her when she came across them by accident that causes great concern and justifies the inclusion of this particular incident which I believe amounts to sexual harassment. It also appears that this is not the first time he has committed this act. Although I personally have no specific evidence Miss McAteer raised this fact with Carecall.

**7. The Code of Conduct for Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly (The Code)**

- (a) The scope of The Code extends only to the deeds and words of individuals performing their function as an elected Member of the Assembly. It establishes the principles of conduct expected of Members, which are:

- (1) Public Duty
- (2) Selflessness
- (3) Integrity
- (4) Objectivity
- (5) Accountability
- (6) Openness
- (7) Honesty
- (8) Leadership
- (9) Equality
- (10) Promoting Good Relations

- (b) For a complaint to be considered by the Commissioner it is essential to establish that the alleged offending behavior of Mr McCrea was indeed carried out in his capacity as a MLA. I present my case to this effect as follows:

(1) **Sexual Harassment** The allegations of sexual harassment arise from his actions towards staff employed by him to support his role as a MLA and who were remunerated through his OCE. The alleged incidents occurred whilst the individuals were performing their duties in an employment capacity, both on and off site of Parliament Buildings, including his constituency office in Dromore. I contend that his actions were carried out by him as a Member in receipt of OCE towards his employees paid by him through his OCE account.

(2) Sexual Harassment is defined in Article 6(A) of the Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976 (as amended) and states the following:

(1) that for the purposes of this Order, a person subjects a woman to harassment if:

(a) on the ground of her sex, he engages in unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect:

(i) Of violating her dignity; or

(ii) Of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for her.

(b) he engages in any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect:

- (i) Of violating her dignity; or
- (ii) Of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for her.

(c) on the ground of her rejection of or submission to unwanted conduct of a kind mentioned in sub-paragraph (a) or (b), he treats her less favourably than he would treat her had she not rejected, or submitted to, the conduct.

6(A)(2) Conduct shall be regarded as having the effect mentioned in paragraph (1) (a) or (b) only, if having regard to all the circumstances, including in particular the perception of the woman, it should reasonably be considered as having that effect.

- (3) There is ample case law to define when an act of harassment has taken place "in the course of employment". The case of *O'Neill v Herbel Restaurants and Others* (full citation not known) is authority in this instance stating that "their employment was the reason they were both in each other's company" and is referenced at Part 4 (page 61) in the guidance document "Harassment and Bullying in the Workplace" jointly published by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Labour Relations Agency<sup>1</sup>. I am therefore confident that when applying this information to the facts of this element of my complaint, it clearly demonstrates that Mr McCrea's alleged acts of sexual harassment were carried out whilst he was acting in his capacity as a Member and the employer of the individuals concerned, paid through his OCE to which he is entitled as a Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- (4) **Bullying and Harassment in the workplace.** The allegations of bullying and harassment in the workplace relate to his treatment of his office support staff who are or were remunerated through his OCE, to volunteers he personally brought in to support his role as a MLA, to interns he personally brought in to support his role as a MLA, to a member of my staff paid through my OCE with whom Mr McCrea only had contact with through his position as a Member and to Party staff remunerated through the Financial Assistance to Political Parties (FAPP) scheme. Mr McCrea's offending behavior was directed at individuals performing their duties as directed by him in order to support his role as a MLA.
- (5) **Voyeuristic Photographs amounting to sexual harassment.** It is my understanding that the subject photographs were taken when Mr McCrea made an official visit to Canada in 2013. I believe the trip was part funded by [REDACTED] the purpose of the visit was to "build connections in business for Northern Ireland". Mr McCrea was conducting the visit as a MLA and met with a number of business leaders out there. It was organised by his office support staff and Jamie Mackrell, Karen Tabahe and Fiona McAteer will be able to confirm the specific details.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk)



- (6) It transpires that Mr McCrea had initially met Miss Neglia, the subject of the photographs, when she was taking part in a placement in Downpatrick in 2012. Prior to leaving for Canada in 2013 Mr McCrea made contact with her to arrange meeting up with her. He offered her a job based in his office in Parliament Buildings. It is therefore my contention that, given Mr McCrea was in Canada on official business in his capacity as a MLA, that he had every intention of making Miss Neglia his employee to support his role as a MLA (which is evidenced by the fact she did indeed take up a position with him and was remunerated through his OCE), it is impossible to argue that Mr McCrea was acting in any capacity other than as a Member at the time of taking the photographs. I would also argue that the photographs violated Miss Neglia's dignity and therefore amount to sexual discrimination under Article 6 of the Sexual Discrimination Order as defined in paragraph 7(a)(2) of this document based on the effect these photographs had on her when she stumbled across them by accident in the course of her employment.

**8. Breaches of the Code of Conduct and by which alleged act**

- (a) The Rules of The Code of Conduct state that "Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Assembly and never undertake any action which would bring the Assembly into disrepute".
- (b) The Code is unambiguous with regard to payments or allowances made to Members for public purposes, stating that the rules applying to such payments, allowances and resources must be strictly adhered to. The attempt to transfer his OCE allowance into a direct personal cash payment through his staff totally contradicts the rules in this regard and I contend it is a breach of the principles of Public Duty, Selflessness, Integrity, Accountability, Openness and Honesty.
- (c) The numerous allegations outlined in this complaint against Mr McCrea of bullying and harassment in the workplace and the allegations of sexual harassment as documented above demonstrate that he has failed to discharge his duties as a Member in accordance with the standard expected under The Code. The constant influx and change of staff which I contend is a direct result of his treatment of them has affected his ability to provide the standard of service expected by his constituents and is a clear breach of the principle of Public Duty. The acts of bullying and harassment, including the sexual harassment demonstrate that Mr McCrea has breached the principles of equality and respect by his rude, aggressive, intimidating and offensive behaviour which has the capability of lowering the public's regard for, and confidence in, Members and the Assembly itself.
- (d) His actions towards Miss Murray in particular are a breach of the principle of equality by his excessive monitoring of her working practices and her private life. His attempts to enlist others to effectively "spy" on her movements go beyond the pale! He tried to disown his own responsibilities and duty of care as the employer of his personal office staff by delegating these firstly to Suzanne Chalkley, who was at the time a Party Executive Member but not an employee and then to [REDACTED] neither of whom should play any active role in the management of staff paid through OCE for the purposes of providing support to a Member. I believe that by refusing to properly

manage his staff and volunteers, effectively divorcing himself from any responsibility for a duty of care for their welfare, Mr McCrea has breached the principle of Leadership.

## 9. Conclusion

- (a) In addition to the information that precedes this conclusion I feel it is important to relate my own personal experience and views regarding Mr McCrea's behavior that I believe are relevant to support the allegations and my complaint. It becomes blatantly apparent that there is a distinct pattern of young, impressionable females passing through his employment which has been the subject of many a joke throughout the corridors of Parliament Buildings. I mentioned to Mr McCrea on numerous occasions during the last seven years that the instability and dysfunctionality of his employment arrangements are not good practice and do not serve to benefit his constituents. In hindsight I would draw attention to the "type" of person that he frequently engages and how quickly those individuals either move on of their own accord or are marginalized by Mr McCrea when the nature of the relationship changes. This is particularly clear in the case of Miss Murray and Miss Neglia. One cannot help but question why this could be and I suggest the only conclusion to be drawn is that when they stood up to him and made it clear they would not accept his unwanted attention they were subjected to bullying, harassment and victimization of a most terrible and unacceptable kind. Mr McCrea's actions have had a lasting detrimental effect on all of the staff involved but more so on Miss Murray and Miss Neglia. Such was Miss Neglia's distress that she specifically asked for counseling. It is also worthy of note that Mr McCrea tried very hard to dissuade Miss Neglia from engaging with Carecall. I personally witnessed her terror of Mr McCrea when she called into the Party Office in Stormont with her boyfriend to say goodbye to Peter Hutchinson and Fiona McAteer. I was in the office and she was visibly shaking every time the office door opened, such was her fear. Her experience during her employment with Mr McCrea led her to tell me she would never set foot in Northern Ireland again.
- (b) According to the staff who engaged with Carecall there appears to be a history of abuse by Mr McCrea of his female employees. He would constantly test, push and overstep the boundaries between his position as an employer and his staff, particularly with female staff by encroaching their personal space, making them feel distinctly uncomfortable and making unnecessary and inappropriate remarks and physical contact. It is a total abuse of his position as a MLA.
- (c) It is also apparent that Mr McCrea consistently made malicious, derogatory, intimidating and humiliating comments to the faces and behind the backs of his staff and others who challenged him in a professional manner. Mr McCrea constantly created tension; he used his position as a Member to undermine relationships to the point of paranoia, causing doubt and mistrust amongst staff. He would persistently and deliberately create situations to turn staff against each other if he felt a particular individual had displayed some perceived disloyalty to Mr McCrea. His behaviour was detrimental to the efficient running of his office which affected his ability to deliver and meet the expectations of his constituents. It also had a serious debilitating effect on the emotional wellbeing of his staff. He caused them to question the reliability and integrity of their colleagues and of my staff.

- (d) Mr McCrea was particularly critical of Alan Patterson who Mr McCrea had brought in as another volunteer to take responsibility for the management of his staff. When Mr Patterson tried to create order in the chaos that is Mr McCrea's office he ridiculed him to me and told me he had a personality disorder. He openly referred to Nigel Macaulay as being a social moron and when questions arose over Mr McCrea's handling of a significant donation by a Party supporter which was given for a specific purpose, Mr McCrea went as far as denying during an Executive meeting that he had received the cheque which had been made out personally to Mr McCrea. When challenged, Mr McCrea said the donor was mistaken, accusing them of being senile and suffering from dementia; an accusation which is totally and utterly unfounded. I mention this only because it is yet another example of Mr McCrea's attitude and behaviour when his actions are being called to account.
- (e) I have taken considerable care in compiling this document to ensure I have been factually correct in detailing the individual allegations. In accordance with the Complaints Procedure as detailed in The Code, I believe I have identified the relevant sections of The Code that have been breached and by which of the alleged acts. I believe that where it has been available to me, I have presented sufficient supporting evidence to establish a prime facie case that breaches of The Code of Conduct as illustrated have occurred and that you should now proceed with an investigation into these matters.

**John McCallister MLA**  
**03 August 2014**



**NI21 – Carecall Investigation****Timeline of events**

**29<sup>th</sup> April** – John alerted by Annette that she had seen information on social media that showed the rumours involving Basil that had been abounding for weeks were about to be placed in the public domain via [REDACTED].

**1<sup>st</sup> May** – Kathy Wilson who works for John's in his constituency office is contacted by a constituent who had told her he had heard rumours of Basil behaving inappropriately in a sexual manner with a young Canadian intern. John informed [REDACTED] and Basil of serious implications re the [REDACTED] stuff.

**3<sup>rd</sup> May** – [REDACTED] had lengthy discussion with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Basil at [REDACTED] house. John indicated his desire to instigate an independent investigation into the validity of rumours given their nature.

**5<sup>th</sup> May** – [REDACTED] emailed John informing him that she had taken a phone call from [REDACTED] informing her that he had sent "a file to two newspapers today at 9am". He claimed to have been speaking to three individuals about allegations around harassment issues. The individuals were not comfortable making a formal complaint but were comfortable in speaking with him ([REDACTED]) and the press.

**7<sup>th</sup> May** – In conversation with Basil and John, Basil agrees to John bringing in carecall to speak with the staff for whom John has responsibility but not for Basil's staff. He will discuss after the election whether he will agree to cooperating with Carecall and whether they can engage with his staff.

**7<sup>th</sup> May** - (afternoon) John confronted [REDACTED] outside of the UFU offices in relation to an episode in Cork last year whereby she had allegedly been approached by one of Basil's female staff who was upset at having been subjected to inappropriate physical contact by Basil. [REDACTED] confirmed this was the case but told John the complainant had not wanted it taken further. John then contacts carecall and initiates investigation. John emails Party staff and his constituency staff in the evening (CCd to Basil) clarifying the position; why he has had to involve carecall, confirming Basil's agreement to this course of action and offering relevant staff the voluntary option of engaging with the process. All relevant staff confirmed they would be happy to participate. To date no acknowledgement or response has been received from Basil.

**13<sup>th</sup> May** – [REDACTED] rang John to say that a female former staff member had walked into newsletter and made serious allegations against Basil. She did not want to be named at this stage but had specifically requested to meet with John asp, again in the NL offices.

**14<sup>th</sup> May** – (morning) John met the girl now known to have been Ashleigh Murray. She repeated the allegations to John and confirmed she wanted action taken against Basil.





**14<sup>th</sup> May** – (evening) Emergency Executive meeting called by John. Members present around the table were John McCallister, Annette Holden, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There is reason to suspect Basil was present in the house somewhere. Purpose of meeting was to confirm (without revealing the identity of the source for genuine fear of reprisals) that allegations of a very serious nature against Basil had been presented to the Party (via John as Chief Whip); that as a result the carecall process had been brought forward and interviews would now start this Friday (16<sup>th</sup> May) instead of after the election and that the Exec needed to be prepared to act swiftly in dealing with Basil should carecall decide on Friday that there are sufficient grounds to do so.

**14<sup>th</sup> May (Cont)** - There is a highly detailed document of the discussion available for scrutiny if required but during the meeting the carecall process was clearly endorsed by the Executive. It was apparent during the meeting that the Exec's main concern was that the person who came forward was not an existing employee and could/should not therefore be afforded a duty of care or an opportunity to air her concerns.

**15<sup>th</sup> May** – (09:59) – [REDACTED] emails the Executive confirming she has made an appointment to see a "specialist lawyer for advice and will revert today at 3pm to all". She also said she was vet (very?) "comfortable with John taking whatever actions he sees fit for his staff".

**15<sup>th</sup> May** – (11.36pm) – Email received from [REDACTED] attaching legal advice stating John was wrong to include former employee in process and she should not be allowed to participate in the investigation. Since John was not party to the giving of info to the legal adviser he does not know the context or content of information shared in order to form the legal opinion provided. Given the serious nature of the allegations, he felt it necessary that Ashleigh be allowed to continue.

**16<sup>th</sup> May** – Carecall starts interviewing staff.

**16<sup>th</sup> May** - Annette considers the legal advice and is prompted to draft her resignation email for serious consideration as she feels this is a blatant attempt to frustrate a legitimate investigation into serious allegations against the Leader.

**17<sup>th</sup> May** – After sleeping on it and still feeling the same, Annette emailed to the Exec members, her resignation from the Executive.

**20<sup>th</sup> May** – **Party re-designation is announced.** [REDACTED] sends an email at 14:12 calling an exec meeting at 5pm in Belfast but no Agenda or indication as to purpose of meeting and key policy staff member is not available to attend meeting. Subject matter of email is given as "Strategy Update". John attends meeting (lasts 10 minutes) where he is told the Party is re-designating as "other" at next term. However, it is clear there has been a pre-meeting with other exec members excluding John given that [REDACTED] had to leave her canvassing early in Belfast to make an Exec meeting starting much earlier than the time told to John.





**20<sup>th</sup> May** (Cont) - The Press had also been informed of the decision prior to John's meeting with the Exec taking place. It is John's firm opinion, based on the logic of the decision, the timing of the decision and his knowledge of a "pre-meeting" that this was an attempt to get him to resign from the Party and therefore relinquish control of the investigation process.

**22 May** - (8.56am) [REDACTED] sent email to John "At our meeting last week it was agreed that you would bring in carecall to speak to staff.....". Email clearly confirms agreement to process and goes on to ask for an update "as it was agreed that any report would be considered in determining a proper course of action".

**22 May** - (21:47) [REDACTED] emails his resignation from the Executive and from the Party. His resignation is followed swiftly by the remaining Exec members. [REDACTED] tweets her resignation simultaneously.

**22 May** - (22:05) Basil sends an email round to some Party members stating that "...John McCallister will give an extensive interview alleging that the decision to re-designate was an attempt to derail an investigation into inappropriate sexual activity by me".

**25<sup>th</sup> May** - [REDACTED] emailed John stating "as discussed on Friday evening (23<sup>rd</sup> May) I would like to assist the Carecall investigation....)

**5<sup>th</sup> June** - Email received from Basil's legal advisers attaching solicitor's letter which confirms Basil received the report from Carecall on 3<sup>rd</sup> June to which he has to respond.

**27<sup>th</sup> May** - Email received from Basil giving details of new Interim Exec appointed by him. [REDACTED] is nominated as Chair.

**11<sup>th</sup> June** - [REDACTED] and John talk about the Carecall report. She advised him that carecall have asked her if she wants the process to continue. It is her decision. There is an Exec meeting later this night. At no time during John's attendance was the report or a decision discussed. Both Basil and John were asked to leave the meeting briefly. When then did she make the decision and with whom did she consult?

**13<sup>th</sup> June** - [REDACTED] from Carecall rang John to inform him that NI21 did not want the carecall process to continue and therefore no further action would be taken by them. John then rang [REDACTED] to ask how he is expected to manage the current staff who have contributed statements and evidence to the investigation. The Party does not have the capacity to deal with this and why was she so fearful of this process.

**17<sup>th</sup> June** - The Exec puts out a statement that at no stage have they seen the report; nor indeed do they have the capacity to halt it. That is John's remit. Carecall email a letter to John and [REDACTED] confirming that "the current NI21 Executive did not authorise the investigation to continue". As a result Carecall have had to suspend the investigation.



Jacquelyn Neglia

JM<sup>e</sup>C 3

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## Appendix (CB) (2)

### Interview Record

**Case reference number:** NI21 011-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Complainant B (CB) (2)  
**Others present:** Representation declined  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Karen Tabahe (KT), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister (JMcC), Ashleigh Murray (AM), Kirsty McClea (KMcC), Nigel Macauley (NM), [REDACTED], Jamie Mackrell (JM), [REDACTED], Peter Hutchinson (PH), Suzanne Chalkey (SC), Conor Clements (CC)

### Record of interview:

#### 1.0 Introductions and Process

1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment.

1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:

- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
- The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
- Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.

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- Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
- [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
- [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

2.0 Opening Comments

- 2.1 [REDACTED]
- 2.2 Placed with BMcC in summer 2012 for three weeks. In one of the three weeks, he showed her around Northern Ireland and explained politics
- 2.3 In the last week BMcC offered CB a job – she didn't take it seriously

3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 BMcC messaged CB as he was going to Canada. They met up when he was there, he offered her a job. This was a big opportunity for a student. CB said yes and sorted a visa. CB was aware she was not qualified and there could be an underlying reason for being hired. CB took a year off to take the job.
- 3.2 BMcC invited CB to a hotel room, asked her to sit on bed. When she was in Ireland, she saw pictures of this on iCloud. Came about as BMcC said "have to get something in room" "sit on bed, let me take you picture" she was wearing red dress, he took pictures she didn't know about.
- 3.3 CB family wanted to meet him and parents and grandparents invited him to dinner. He wanted to meet her first and they went to the CN Tower. He then wanted to go on a police boat ride to the Legal building, they didn't go as police had to do a rescue.
- 3.4 CB's parents were sceptical after meeting BMcC, and asked if she was sure. CB felt she could handle herself.
- 3.5 In August 2013, BMcC said he had a role for CB, he instead that he would find a place for her. When she reminded him, he said "don't worry about it". When she arrived, she had no place to live. The job was for 37 hours per week on minimum wage – CB has this in writing. BMcC tried to pay her £50.00 per week.
- 3.6 BMcC sorted accommodation – [REDACTED] house ([REDACTED] [REDACTED] drove CB to city and she got a bus to Stormont.
- 3.7 CB moved to rented house with three other girls. Pay was agreed at [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The arrangement was meant to be for two months, CB approached BMcC at the beginning to stay longer.
- 3.8 On first week of work, CB invited to Cork (Present: [REDACTED] BMcC, CC, [REDACTED] CB). BMcC said it would be good experience
- 3.9 On the first night, they had a few drinks. In cab back to hotel, had to sit on lap. At hotel, he grabbed CB backside when trying to get in (they needed a key). No one saw it. [REDACTED] also hit on her and asked her to go to his hotel room via email.
- 3.10 CB didn't want to make a big thing but thought it best to tell [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] that night, said she would speak to BMcC, also "men will be men, don't let it bother you, Brush it off"

*Simon Kelly  
Jiney School  
2013*

- 3.11 [REDACTED] did speak to BMcC – he never tried anything again.
- 3.12 [REDACTED] & BMcC were both making her feel uncomfortable and weird
- 3.13 It was [REDACTED]'s Landover – CB asked her to move the seats around so she didn't have to sit with them
- 3.14 Job description – BMcC insisted that CB find her own. CB found he was mismanaging email. Said google apps might help.
- 3.15 BMcC wanted to get rid of her when he found out she wasn't going to be his plaything, or flatter him, or be a yes man.
- 3.16 He kept moving her - Youth Directive/Policy. He would say she was not doing a good job, but CB worked hard and made contacts for the party. Resulted in most follows on Twitter/Facebook, even by comparison to established parties. He was pushing her out.
- 3.17 BMcC would take concern with her dating life, asked her in the car with [REDACTED] CC and [REDACTED] "are you sleeping with him yet? Regarding JM, it was an accusatory tone, CB told BMcC it was inappropriate.
- 3.18 BMcC would sit and have talks and advise that he was unsure of the men she was dating. He asked personal questions regarding if CB had relationships, if she was sleeping with anyone, made her feel bad about going out "Picked up anymore men?"
- 3.19 [REDACTED]
- 3.20 [REDACTED]
- 3.21 [REDACTED]
- 3.22 CB thought that BMcC told, she went to [REDACTED] as CB thought she was the correct person to go to. [REDACTED] said she would talk to BMcC. [REDACTED] advised CB that BMcC said it was for scheduling issues. Then [REDACTED] said "If you have an issue, go talk to him yourself" CB didn't as she knew it wouldn't go anywhere.
- 3.23 Issue about [REDACTED] leaking a story about a girl to the media. [REDACTED] sat CB down and asked if it was her. Kept calling her "good CB hadn't gone to media as she had put a lot of time into her campaign"
- 3.24 Girl in the media – speculation it was [REDACTED] – she worked with BMcC at UUP. FMCA said she left abruptly but CB knows her from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said "it's going to come out eventually" CB assumed it was something sexual.
- 3.25 Women in politics debate, specific question from [REDACTED] about politicians abusing power – it was directed at [REDACTED]. CB cut it off before anything was said about BMcC directly. CB watched recording last night, [REDACTED] said she was familiar with politicians taking advantage of young women specifically.

- 3.26 CB thinks leak is not in party, had access to social media – all kinds of women message BMcC – he likes attention. Picks out young blondes, “I’ll get you interested in Politics”, offering placements all the time, embarrassing.
- 3.27 AM told CB minimal things. BMcC made comments on AM underwear, putting hand up her leg, massages – getting them/giving them. BMcC revolted AM, CB said it was unlikely they would have a relationship. He spread rumours, painted images that AM was not trustworthy.
- 3.28 After a stage, BMcC worried that AM would turn on him, he would ask what the office thought of her and say “she’s uneducated” or “she overreacts”
- 3.29 CB had an idea of what AM would be like, didn’t know how to handle herself, or be professional. AM is very open, she said something to BMcC in presence of CB, and BMcC said “see everything she says, you can’t trust her”.
- 3.30 BMcC said to CB that AM was out to get her, that she was jealous that CB could potentially replace her. CB thought that must be it and felt reserved around her, then she saw it wasn’t like that at all. They started talking and saw that BMcC had put them in the same corner.
- 3.31 CB found that BMcC did this with everyone. E.g. [REDACTED] she had strong feelings about women in business and politics, CB really liked her and thought she supported her thoughts, BMcC said “Do you like [REDACTED] more than me?” CB would reply “No I lived with her, met her family, babysat her kids” BMcC did same with JMcC.
- 3.32 [REDACTED] once hired CB for leaflets to earn money – turned out not to be worth paying for, useless money. [REDACTED] sister said same. BMcC said [REDACTED] talking behind back, he was trying to be her friend, it was unprofessional, and silly – why would he do that? He did this with anyone CB built relationships with.
- 3.33 In November, CB made it clear that she was tired of it, BMcC would want to get to know her and have one to ones, but CB just wanted to get on with it, he would say “this is what I think...” CB would have to ask “what do you want from me?” BMcC didn’t like that.
- 3.34 At conference, CB felt that BMcC was starting to push her out of the party. She was going home for Christmas for three weeks, she felt his goal was to get her out so she wouldn’t come back, but CB wanted the year she signed up for because she worked hard. PH & FMcA supported her.
- 3.35 CB started to worry, she was in another country, she had no money, felt pushed out and she didn’t deserve it. She spoke to a solicitor regarding her rights.
- 3.36 CB told AM and SC, they were both upset at how they were being treated. AM told SC who told [REDACTED] that she had been to a solicitor. [REDACTED] said that it would do nothing but bad, [REDACTED] works in recruitment, she is the [REDACTED] and said she had no rights. CB thinks this scared them into thinking about her job and raise.
- 3.37 BMcC didn’t want staff talking to Carecall, offered to one to one interviews. CB said she wasn’t comfortable with that and was interested in Carecall, that she was off sick. BMcC asked for a doctor’s note. BMcC told CB that she didn’t understand what Carecall was and might not be right for her but if she wanted, he could set appointment up.
- 3.38 BMcC tried to go out with her on a Saturday night, then made her feel guilty. It was during the World Fire & Police Games, CB went to opening and met Canadians, invited them out with friends on the Saturday. CB mentioned to BMcC who was unhappy. “Are you sure you want to?” “Is that safe?” CB met up with them, they became friends, went out a few times.



- 3.39 CB told KMcC who agreed to come out on the Saturday night. BMcC wanted CB to work. KMcC mentioned to BMcC they were going out, BMcC said "I'll come out". CB laughed it off with a no. BMcC was really angry and wounded. KMcC said maybe let him come. He said "I'm young and fun" they had to bring him to Lavery's where he sat and watched them. CB left, KMcC babysat him for the night.
- 3.40 BMcC threw a baseball at CB's head. CB came into room when BMcC was being interviewed for radio, he was on the phone. CB walked in, BMcC threw it at her head to shut her up, told her to get out. It hurt.  
BMcC: "I'm sorry but I was on an interview"  
CB: "OK well you didn't have to throw the ball"  
BMcC: "It was important"  
CB: "That's fine, next time I'll be more quiet"
- 3.41 Following day, BMcC called CB into office for discussion, there was complaints about interview as he had sounded frazzled, he said it was due to noise and blamed CB. It was a formal warning. FMcA was sitting in, it was surreal. CB didn't say anything. FMcA asked if she was ok, she was so shocked blame went to her.
- 3.42 Paid [REDACTED] per month, CB said she was going to get another job, BMcC said not to, that the role was 24/7 and he needed her on call, said he would find more money, only when she saw a solicitor it scared him into paying her minimum wage.
- 3.43 BMcC made a joke that CB was familiar with hockey because she "slept with the whole Canadian team", he said this in an elevator in Stormont in the presence of [REDACTED] and CC
- 3.44 KT was like his punching bag, she is so good and so kind, and he would constantly verbally abuse her. Others (FMcA and JM) told CB about when KT had to leave for stress but CB can imagine as it is constant. In July 2013, August – September 2013, he would say "we have to get rid of KT". Constituents used to call and KT would manage this, now constituents don't call as KMcC hates this, no one visits.
- 3.45 NM – constantly a victim, treated horribly by BMcC. CB was Youth Director, set up a Youth Twitter account body on social media, all ready. NM made a NI21 Youth Twitter account, advertised as NI21 and said silly things in it, CB shut it down and sent to twitter. NM called very smug and said he "wanted to teach a lesson" BMcC was very angry, felt he couldn't trust NM. NM is an expert at elections, useful in party and very good at this job.
- 3.46 CB hears BMcC talk about NM, shouldn't be in his office, and doesn't want him near the party. CB initially didn't trust him. BMcC has held a grudge and won't give NM a chance, he was fuming that NM was starting. JMcC is paying him so there should be no reason why BMcC gets a say. BMcC put him through the ropes, JMCC said shouldn't have to do this, that he would pay him to the end.

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.

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- 4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

[REDACTED]

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of interviewee

DATA SUBJECT COPY

*Appendix (FMcA)****Interview Record***

**Case reference number:** NI21 005-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Fiona McAteer (FMcA)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Karen  
 Tabahe (KT), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister  
 (JMcC), Complainant B (CB), Jamie Mackrell (JM), [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED], Kirsty McClea (KMCC), [REDACTED], Peter Hutchinson  
 (PH), [REDACTED], Conor Clements (CC), [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED], Ashleigh Murray (AM), [REDACTED]  
 Suzanne Chalkey (SC), [REDACTED], Nigel Macauley  
 (NM), [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.



- Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
- [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
- [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

## 2.0 Opening Comments

- 2.1 Present as a witness and to make a 3<sup>rd</sup> party statement of inappropriate behaviour by BMcC to others

FMcA has been there for approx. 3 years. Joined on a gap placement year, partially for BMcC who interviewed her for 2 hours, BMcC gave her a full time role as a researcher for 6 months, and extended. BMcC got 6 months free and further 6 months heavily subsidised. Worked for another year as researcher and on constituency matters.

BMcC wanted FMcA to be on new party staff. Started June 2013. Based at Lisburn and Stormont.

## 3.0 Detail of Allegations

### 3.1 Example

BMcC would wait until CB left room and then would make inappropriate comments "Nice Skirt" and "I really like outfit". And then nothing when CB returns.

### 3.2 Example

FMcA is not a tactile person, BMcC would use this fact. FMcA set boundaries with him. Example of Queens's visit, FMcA was running around organising visitors, BMcC made sure that all the others had gone on, he was putting his arm around her waist and invading her personal space. Playing on it as a joke "I know you don't like to be touched"

### Example

On her fiancé's birthday FMcA had requested leave and BMcC asked what she was doing, she said she was going to the Merchant Spa with her fiancé. BMcC made really crude comments about her fiancé getting to look at her in her bikini – not appropriate. Subtle things but made to feel uncomfortable

### 3.3 Example

UUP Party dinner, BMcC drunkenly assessing FMcA. Making comments about her clothes and sitting too close. FMcA felt he was assessing boundaries and people's vulnerability.

### 3.4 Example

[REDACTED] – Alliance Party, BMcC was involved. FMcA attended meetings with BMcC. He contacted FMcA to advise he might not make it to meeting, FMcA went. The room was set in a square. BMcC came in, ignored FMcA and was looking at [REDACTED] and toying with phone (his phone is linked to the iCloud in the office). He had taken



pictures of [REDACTED] when she had no idea – the next day in the office FMcA saw them. There were also Facebook exchanges on the account on the office about them meeting to go for a walk.

KT, BMcC and FMcA were in the office – he invited them to the canteen for coffee (not a usual occurrence). He was distracted – [REDACTED] was there. BMcC made excuses, he was talking and whispering with [REDACTED], he had staged this. Late FMcA saw emails, BMcC had arranged to meet [REDACTED], and he used FMcA and KT as an excuse. Don't know reasoning for this.

Team have access to his emails

KT – assembly

FMcA – BMcC.com

JM did a lot of social media, BMcC used to be open with phone, they all had access. BMcC good at justifying info – eg [REDACTED] at Alliance unhappy at party, maybe looking to move to a new party

If [REDACTED] sees FMcA, she won't speak to (she used to) and FMcA not sure why. FMcA can't be sure of what side of the story he tells to others.

**3.5 Example**

FMcA first to the office in mornings. One morning – BMcC underwear were in the middle of the floor.

FMcA/KT have been asked to clean office/car, KT found underwear in his car too.

**3.6 Example**

Kirsty – was on paid work experience. She was offered work on return from holidays and refused. Whatever his behaviour was, she said she would never work with him again. FMcA found this strange as she had got on so well with the girls in the team.

**3.7 Example**

Summer School in Cork, Early Summer 2013. CB told FMcA that BMcC had a few drinks and grabbed her backside, and tried to get her to sit in his lap. BMcC asked CB if she slept with JM in a car full of people – not appropriate.

BMcC met CB through friends of St Patrick in Ireland. He went to Canada and met her again, and her parents. He took her to his hotel in Canada and took pictures of her, they were visible to all staff in office. CB said she felt so uncomfortable but went along with it.

**3.8 Example**

[REDACTED]

**3.9 Example**

After Cork, [REDACTED] told CB to "brush it off, it happens to everyone". After this BMcC relinquished line management. BMcC referred his "HR Problems" to [REDACTED].





Now BMcC and [REDACTED] are saying that [REDACTED] never had line management. There is a web of lies with BMcC and [REDACTED].

Emails are sent out now to make FMcA and PH feel like they have done something wrong. There was an email sent out for end of year reviews by BMcC – Never done before. FMcA has never had a review, it is because of the Carecall intervention. BMcC advised CB that she didn't need Carecall, and that he could set something up. (CB advised BMcC that she wasn't comfortable to have a one to one). CB has been feeling unwell, BMcC wants a doctor's note.

### 3.10 Example

"Held Hostage" for 2-3 hours on Monday. Didn't say they couldn't leave but didn't feel they could go. [REDACTED] Tweets – he was the Communications Director for party in June 2013. [REDACTED] got in a debate on Facebook that went against party politics so was no longer the Communications Director – July 2013. FMcA didn't have any dealings with him but [REDACTED] and CC were talking to him recently.

BMcC was showing [REDACTED] rebuttal, solicitor letter & tweets in the room. BMcC and [REDACTED] are good at accusing but not really.... "Someone has... I know it's not you...BUT are you sure CB is really in Paris?" BMcC trying to figure out "What's her behaviour like"

FMcA & PH didn't want to say anything.

BMcC called JMcC, loudly talking about Carecall "I can deal with my own staff" Leak was about BMcC and sexual harassment. PH went to room and asked if they were being accused. BMcC came into FMcA's room "with us for three years, coming to you as a friend, not as a boss" felt he was saying do not talk at Carecall, feeling awkward.

### 3.11 Example

Karen April 2013 – organising away day at Easter to La Mon, there was a miscommunication over who was organising it – JMcC's team or BMcC's team, resulted in chaos. KT went to get BMcC from the member's room. BMcC screamed in her face, he was leaning over the desk screaming so loudly, it was another level than FMcA had seen before. FMcA was praying that JMcC would stop BMcC.

[REDACTED] in the office was so shocked. KT left the following week with work related stress. FMcA told BMcC and saw the sick line.

The day KT left, in adjoining room to [REDACTED]'s, KT went to hide so that BMcC couldn't talk to her, she was hysterical and broken.

FMcA had to go to a meeting with BMcC and JMcC and [REDACTED] helped KT pack up. Staff saw her in such a state, people at Stormont knew her. BMcC told FMcA to "have a word with her", FMcA advised him that KT was gone, BMcC said "oh right" FMcA said it was hard, AM started, it was a difficult time. BMcC wasn't happy that KT sick line said work related stress.

Adjoining offices all heard BMcC. Other staff are petrified of him, they heard the shouting. [REDACTED] staff member who froze when BMcC came in, FMcA had to help her out of the room, she was unable to focus.

### 3.12 Example

[REDACTED] asked FMcA if she noticed anything inappropriate regarding AM – FMcA said that BMcC wanted to give AM a chance, asked FMcA to go and talk to her. FMcA reports that this was an unhealthy relationship. BMcC collected her and left her home at all times, they shared drinks, i.e. lifting fizzy drink off her desk and drinking it, not appropriate behaviour for a boss.

FMcA never saw anything sexual but there was a lingering touch on her arm, on chairs, he sat very close and touched her arm, made her uncomfortable.



asked was it abuse of Power? FMcA said yes, AM was vulnerable and open to it. AM wanted skills and guidance as she was on the dole, and he took advantage. FMcA recognises a pattern of young professional women not being an interest "boring" or "not up for much"

Also KT, he abused her good nature as she was vulnerable when she started and he took advantage, KT would take her phone to the toilet for fear he would call her, BMCC would call her on a night out and expect a lift home, she didn't always get lunch, he called her at weekends and days off.

**3.13 Example**

La Mon incident – AM or CB told FMcA. BMcC has asked her to touch/massage him. FMcA said there was drink involved but isn't aware of the timescales as she wasn't there.

**3.14 Example**

Europa – FMcA details a time when she called BMcC when he was in the Europa Hotel, AM was there with him but otherwise there was silence, FMcA felt it wasn't right, FMcA said to KT it didn't feel right – there was nothing in the diary.

**3.15 Example**

It turned sour with AM, AM advised he would wait at the bus stop for her, BMcC would ask/fish for info "Has AM said anything about me?" from those he thought might know.

AM – there were texts and emails at crazy times that FMcA felt were inappropriate, Facebook exchanges would be visible for all to see in the office.

**3.16 Example**

Inappropriate behaviour with CB – she was a student. BMcC used that as an excuse on her character that she had a social life. Example of the Police & Fire Games Event, CB was friendly with the Canadian hockey team and BMcC said "Who hasn't she been with?"

The way he first spoke about her that she was up for a good time and his play thing.

asked CB "have you slept with him?" (BMcC)

**3.17 Example**

CB set up google system. She corrected BMcC, he got annoyed. He apologised and said he didn't know how to react around pretty girls as he was bullied at school.

**3.18 Example**

. Was involved with BMcC, she seemed interested, then it just stopped. was short with FMcA. Then found an email exchange that BMcC met her. CB and Nigel told FMcA that he felt her up and touched her inappropriately and she didn't confront him. He apologised but there was no action taken. got (her volunteer) to contact to ask her if she was the one who leaked the sexual harassment

**3.19 Example**

Pattern of vulnerable people. BMcC asks about home life. FMcA is quite private and didn't engage.

Am – Childhood

KT –

JM – issues with pay rise, JM got a pay rise and had to give the money back to BMcC, issues with childcare, he never got pay rise.



JM contact number is [REDACTED]

**3.20 Example**

Suzanne Chalkey – BBQ weekend away. Touching back, they are consenting adults. However she left and no longer wants to be involved with the party.

**3.21 Example**

BMcC [REDACTED] work, girl who worked on this left and subsequently retrained as a counsellor. She was taken from room by [REDACTED]

**3.22 Example**

[REDACTED] was on placement with BMcC three years ago, her mother told KT that she is only now getting over what BMcC did to her.

**3.23 Example**

NM was hired by JMcC when BMcC was on holidays. FMcA feels that while JMcC did do it wrongly, that BMcC has treated NM appallingly. There was a meeting where BMcC shouted at N for 1.5 hours. Present at the meeting were NM, PH, [REDACTED], BMcC, JMcC (?), FMcA was not a witness but saw how shaken PH and NM were.

BMcC really hated NM and he didn't even try to hide it, swearing, and getting annoyed so quickly. Tension in the office.

**3.24 Example**

[REDACTED] – 10 days working in PR for BMcC and [REDACTED], BMcC didn't treat her professionally – he is used to students. There was an incident with victims, [REDACTED] sent an inappropriate email. [REDACTED] left and said they treat people inhumanely. BMcC recently turned this on [REDACTED] saying she wasn't doing her job right.

**3.25 Example**

KMcC – FMcA is concerned that no one has asked her if she is alright. It is an unhealthy relationship. He goes to her house, her job description is [REDACTED]. She is [REDACTED] years old. They spend a lot of time together. If it is not intimate, she is advertising how much time they spend together, they are over-familiar and it is uncomfortable for others. BMcC is using her. She is not getting on with others and has no one to go to. KMcC says "Don't tell BMcC or [REDACTED] your secrets or ill find out"

**3.26 Example**

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May - Constituent called JMcC regarding rumours, JMcC contacted BMcC and advised him not to approach staff. BMcC took PH down to ask who it could be, asked could it be FMcA. Then BMcC called FMcA in to interrogate her if she knew who it could be. On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>, in Stormont [REDACTED] had called CB in and interrogated her about who it could be. On Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May, [REDACTED] called CB to make sure it wasn't her. Made it about her that it would ruin her campaign, did not even ask CB if she was ok.

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May, BMcC was with PH and FMcA, he could tell that PH and FMcA weren't ok. He tried to deflect about an email as he thought it was that. He wanted to ask but didn't.

There is a culture of fear, lying from people in a position of care. [REDACTED] also covered up and went along with it – she could have stopped it.

Also confidential info from CB went to [REDACTED], who told BMcC, who told KMcC, who shared with CB and her colleagues.

Issues of fear of taking lunch, of talking, of not being paid properly.





FMcA provides contact number for [REDACTED] who works for DK: [REDACTED]

**3.27 Example**

Expectation of working when off. BMcC screaming "What do I pay you for?" "What do you do?"

FMcA had a contract for Mon – Thurs, had been working Fridays for free. Had to change contract to Monday – Friday. Feelings of guilt because he is so powerful. Ingrained "don't talk". People have said before about what BMcC done but felt they couldn't talk.

**3.28 Note:** FMcA expresses concern about [REDACTED] being sent a copy of the report.

**4.0 Closing Comments**

**4.1** [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.

**4.2** [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.

**4.3** The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix (CC)****Interview Record**

**Case reference number:** NI21 007-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Conor Clements (CC)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Karen  
 Tabahe (KT), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister  
 (JMcC), Complainant B (CB), [REDACTED] Suzanne  
 Chalkey (SC), [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Ashleigh  
 Murray (AM), Annette Holden (AH) Kathy Wilson (KW),  
 [REDACTED], Kirsty McClea (KMcC), [REDACTED]

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1** [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2** The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.

- [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
- [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

## 2.0 Opening Comments

- 2.1 Background – CC got involved in pre-launch of new party on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013. Had not previously been in politics, CC contacted BMcC and asked to help.
- 2.2 BMcC gave details of where to come. CC is a film maker, offered to help to get the message out, offered to film statements, events and social media events. This was accepted, met again up to launch.
- 2.3 BMcC brought him to training at BMcC as wanted him speaking. Never employed financially, he was a volunteer but was “head of Social Media”. He established twitter, filmed at events (approx. 50 recorded photos/videos on Youtube).
- 2.4 Could not receive an income as was also employed by father at time.
- 2.5 BMcC called as [REDACTED] (who worked part time) had quit, BMcC offered CC the role.
- 2.6 On first day, it was so unsettling, different BMcC than he had met.
- 2.7 Before launch – worry about twitter. BMcC angry. CC advised him not to worry that he was in politics and this happens. CC never felt comfortable around him, he was aggressive, demeaning, and never thanked anyone.

## 3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 Example:  
Complainant B (CB) and [REDACTED] were there and there was a website problem, they were discussing changes. CB was brought in as an intern, BMcC gave her jobs that CC felt unfair as she wasn't qualified – she struggled. BMcC looked and spoke to her in anger, they were complicated systems. CC felt that he shouldn't behave in this way.
- 3.2 CB came to CC before Christmas 2013, she was having a difficult time. BMcC accused her of ruining the web presence, BMcC saying that CC said she had. BMcC was turning them against each other.
- 3.3 Cork road trip for Sinn Fein debate in CB's first week. [REDACTED] drove, [REDACTED] was in the front, CC, BMcC and CB were in the back. CC heard that BMcC had grabbed CB bottom in the car. CC said that CB can be closed off, hard to know what she feels. CC didn't know as he didn't see it happen, CC of impression that CB spoke to [REDACTED] who wasn't happy. CB told CC about it.
- 3.4 BMcC wanted CC to do more work. After [REDACTED] left, CC was still unpaid. CC didn't talk to him as he wasn't there. He stopped going. BMcC put more pressure on for CC to work for him, he offered £500 per month for 2 days per week. CC was reluctant, but people encouraged C to take the job. He knew that CB was paid little, contracted to 15/16 hours per week and afraid to leave.
- 3.5 FMcA – originally employed by BMcC, advised CC not to take the money. KT asked to meet, that no one was to know they were talking. Advised him how she was treated and said stay away “the minute he gives you a penny, he owns you” that BMcC wanted ownership
- 3.6 KT told CC about how BMcC had in her tears and about work related stress. BMcC wanted rid of her, her hours were cut. She was there to protect the young ones. KT advised to be careful of BMcC, KT was hanging on as she needed job and felt it was the right thing to do as she is [REDACTED]
- 3.7 Supporter of the party encouraged BMcC to pay CC and gave him money to pay CC. BMcC denied it, said man was senile. CC never got money. Not disclosing the name. Abuse of power – bullying is part of this.

- 3.8 CC didn't take job. BMcC put on pressure for answer. CC employed by father, wouldn't take money. Said he couldn't afford to go to Stormont twice a week for half days. CC said he could do one full day. CC asked for terms but couldn't pin BMcC down. CC arranged meetings – he never showed. For example, in [REDACTED] CC waiting from 4.00pm-7.00pm, BMcC never showed.
- 3.9 Elections – BMcC needed CC, CC wasn't comfortable, but still believed in the party. It was [REDACTED] birthday, tea meeting, BMcC said there was enough to pay £1600 per month for elections. CC started working, no meeting to agree money.
- 3.10 At a meeting at [REDACTED]'s house, they discussed CC as working as a volunteer "buy him a pint" CC advised that he can't do it for nothing, [REDACTED] offered £1000 and told him to invoice, no payment received.
- 3.11 At event, [REDACTED] had said that BMcC was coming, he didn't show, [REDACTED] said "it's all fine, come to my office on Friday", where he CC was waiting for one hour, BMcC walked out of the room, and [REDACTED] advised him to focus on getting another job.
- 3.12 CC would not be told about cancelled events, he would show up and no one was there. Example of filming of the flags, BMcC want to launch. CC spent 3 weeks on this solidly. He almost got assaulted as protest was on in Portadown in a loyalist area, surrounded by thugs, CC was frightened. CC put up a tweet "bizarre day...flag protest", BMcC response was "did you get any good footage?" and showing no concern.
- 3.13 AM was CC first point of contact at NI21, CC thought highly of her. Second time they met was at media training. In attendance was [REDACTED], [REDACTED], SC, [REDACTED], AM and CC. Had to give a biography of how you got into politics – AM got up and talked about her childhood – [REDACTED] thought she had been prepped and this was not politics. CC thought it was bizarre, realised that AM was quite vulnerable. AM and BMcC were quite close, he was always with her.
- 3.14 When CB arrived, BMcC turned on AM, tried to get rid of her. CC met AM, he called into Lisburn (approx. sept 2013). AM started to say how BMcC treated her – sitting at bus station to watch what time she came to work.
- 3.15 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2013 – AM text CC to say she quit. CC called her and they had a lengthy talk, CC was glad she left, she wasn't complementary of BMcC, told him things about how she had been treated. Told him that BMcC had touched her up in the car one night. That he kept her late at the Dromore office, and that he had asked her for a massage – CC had asked if she did, AM said she started to but stopped. CC was worried that AM had thought he was judging her.
- 3.16 In the past month/3 weeks ago, [REDACTED] text CC "BMcC is a creepy, sleazy, bullying F\*\*ker."
- 3.17 3 page affidavit from someone who saw a solicitor - led to believe it wasn't AM. CC believes [REDACTED] met the girl and knows who she is.
- 3.18 HEARSAY: CC was in office with Annette who said "Oh that's what the [REDACTED] is about" CC said to Kathy & Annette "Something needs to be done" One of them approached JMcC, who contacted Carecall the following day.
- 3.19 [REDACTED] called CC that night, but he didn't know anything, CC told [REDACTED] "You know what [REDACTED] is like, could be just stirring sh\*t up" CC asked if BMcC was worried, [REDACTED] said "No" and CC advised it was probably nothing.
- 3.20 CC dropped NM off at new flat, [REDACTED] pulled up and got into the car with CC" and said "what am I going to do – this will ruin my campaign" CC reiterated that that it was probably nothing and advised "if you believe something not right. Something needs to be done" her concern was for protecting BMcC and her campaign.
- 3.21 CC showed personal Facebook page, [REDACTED] cover up by party members, CC posted link to BBC – "if you don't want to get found out, don't do it".
- 3.22 [REDACTED] pulled CC to side at BBQ about FB "are you posting a campaign against BMcC?", she then spun it to worry for CC.
- 3.23 Felt isolated at BBQ, cut off from the group. BMcC came up and was jovial but CC kept distance.



- 3.24 The following day after BBQ, CC's NT! emails were cut off
- 3.25 Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May, █████ sent text asking if CC was free to meet up, asked "did you say anything to upset anyone?" CC advised his email were cut off and █████ said he would check it out.
- 3.26 █████ tried to arrange a meeting, CC was told they were trying to grill him, felt threatened. Blocked their numbers and Facebook accounts (BMcC, █████ and KMcC). CC felt uneasy as doesn't want to be in a position of covering up
- 3.27 Women in Politics Event at Queens University (CD presented to █████), CC had been under pressure from CB and had been putting off, CB kept calling. At candidate launch she said "you owe me a video" Going through, CC noticed a question from █████ regarding inappropriate behaviour from MLA's at Stormont. Question is not on due to poor sound but █████ response sums it up. CC watched this and thought this girl is making a cry for help. █████ responded "I see this a lot at Stormont, women need to be equipped how to deal with it"
- 3.28 CC notified BMcC of this girl's question.
- 3.29 CC under impression that CB is bullied into not talking, is concerned about CB & KMcC who has an unhealthy and unnatural working relationship with BMcC, inappropriate levels of access, CC said that one night the group went to KMcC house to work on social media, people left at midnight but BMcC stayed.
- 3.30 BMcC turned on KMcC one night, KMcC went to CC as she was upset and he consoled but she defended BMcC – it's not healthy. CC felt protective of her as not appropriate.
- 3.31 CC telephone number: █████

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 █████ reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 █████ reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Annette Holden [REDACTED]

## Carecall

2 messages

Connor Clements [REDACTED]

To: Annette Holden [REDACTED]

Fri, Jul 18, 2014 at 12:05 PM

Below are a few notes that need correcting on the statement. My complaint will be more detailed than the carecall notes.

- Paragraph 3.21 – Didn't show anything to Basil McCrea, post was only shared with my facebook friends.
- Paragraph 3.25 – I advised [REDACTED] my emails were cut off, and then he asked if I had said or done something to upset anyone.
- Paragraph 3.28 – It was [REDACTED] who notified Basil of the girls' question.

Connor

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Linkedin [REDACTED]

YouTube [REDACTED]

connorclements.tv [REDACTED]



Final NI21 007-05-14-CS - CC - requested notes.pdf  
345K



## *Appendix (JM)*

### ***Interview Record***

**Case reference number:** NI21 010-05-14-CS

**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]

**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]

**Person interviewed:** Jamie Mackrell (JM) by telephone

**Others present:** None

**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014

**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment

**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMCC), Karen Tabahe (KT), Ashleigh Murray (AM), [REDACTED]

#### **Record of interview:**

##### **1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
  - [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
  - [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

##### **2.0 Opening Comments**

- 2.1 JM worked for BMcC in UUP in April 2011 for election campaign, helped with election but there was no set role or structure, pitched in as needed. He was initially a volunteer.
- 2.2 BMcC gave JM a job with pay after one month – 16 hours per week for one year, JM was a student. He then went onto full time employment for BMcC.
- 2.3 Left in April 2013.

### 3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 JM left as relations got quite bad with BMcC, trust was lost and it deteriorated quite badly.
- 3.2 BMcC was trying to ease JM out, heard conversation BMcC saying he wanted him out.
- 3.3 BMcC embarrassed JM in front of his family at a fundraiser which JM had arranged for October 2012.
- 3.4 Event was in the hall of a cricket club and JM had been left to organise, JM wasn't happy with the venue and wasn't confident as hadn't done this before and it was not in his comfort zone (which was not unusual for BMcC) and it went ahead.
- 3.5 Huge money wasn't raised at event, but it got a few numbers. The event didn't keep costs down, that's why it didn't make a lot.
- 3.6 JM mum, sister, niece, grandparents and girlfriend were all present, BMcC knew that JM had worked hard.
- 3.7 In BMcC's speech, he began building up the person who had worked hard at event, and then named someone else – [redacted], who had only done a bit of the work. All of the room had expected it to be JM. He received no thanks or appreciation, in fact BMcC was annoyed as he had wanted more.
- 3.8 JM's mum emailed BMcC to say how disappointed she was, JM never confronted BMcC, JM didn't think it was a big deal and would have been fine but it was obviously an issue for BMcC.
- 3.9 JM advised that BMcC is a bully shouting at everyone in the office, KT got the worst of it, JM didn't have to deal him in the constituency.
- 3.10 The slightest thing would set him off. Stressful. Provided example of travel arrangements, BMcC would call every 5 minutes, shouting, very intimidating.
- 3.11 Always on call for BMcC, example JM on a day off, he was driving and heard a bang, he jumped as he thought it was BMcC calling.
- 3.12 It became so tense, but not at the beginning when BMcC was so generous with his time. Felt like a square peg in a round hole.
- 3.13 BMcC said "we should have been more honest that it wasn't working."
- 3.14 Pay issue – BMcC wanted to give JM more money so that JM could give it back to him. JM advised that he was paid through the office cost allowance. It was put through as pay increase, but JM didn't give him any money – he was going to.
- 3.15 JM was on minimum wage – approx. £250 per week (£14,500). The increase was £100 per month.
- 3.16 BMcC asked him to do this, to give it back to him in cash, BMcC wanted extra money as expenses and saw this money as his that he couldn't unlock.
- 3.17 When JM left, BMcC got him to pay a consultant (Icon Creative PR Firm). JM was charged with getting leaflets drawn up, BMcC had said go down and sort leaflets. JM went, gave overview. When consultant gave work, BMcC wasn't happy and JM had to go back at least twice.
- 3.18 When bill arrived, BMcC wasn't happy "why have you cost me all this money?" BMcC wouldn't pay. Icon kept calling for payment, if JM brought up the subject with BMcC, his mood would change and he would go mad, thought it should be free.

- 3.19 When JM left, BMcC paid holiday pay, but said that JM had to cover part of payment of leaflets as BMcC said it was his fault.
- 3.20 BMcC deducted the leaflet invoice payment from JM holiday pay
- 3.21 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 letter "£384.00 for service initiated by me."
- 3.22 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 , 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to state that JM got holiday pay until 17<sup>th</sup> May
- 3.23 JM to take picture and send.
- 3.24 AM – there was talk within Stormont about AM & BMcC. Strange relationship – seemed very close – picking up directly, dropping off. JM had suspicions but gave BMcC the benefit of the doubt (JM and BMcC had been friends at beginning).
- 3.25 Strange – blinds in BMcC office always open, one day BMcC and AM working late and blinds were shut.
- 3.26 October 2013 - JM back home visiting and AM told him about affair with BMcC (asked for clarification and JM confirmed it was of a sexual nature), that it went on for months. AM told him at the start of a night out in Laverys, can't remember details. JM was not aware if it was still going, AM didn't seem too happy that it had gone on.
- 3.27 At the day of the party conference, all were there and saying that his behaviour had got worse.
- 3.28 For KT it was worse, she was a verbal punch bag for BMcC.
- 3.29 That night, JM tried to confront BMcC, felt ashamed of how he had let BMcC treat him, BMcC made it clear he was the one who paid wages, he knew what levers to pull, and made it known he was the boss. All the team put in hours above and beyond. "this is politics, you have to understand, not 9am-5pm."
- 3.30 JM had plans and BMcC said " I need you here" JM had to bring his daughter.
- 3.31 JM aware that BMcC asked KT for lifts but did not provide petrol money, JM recalls it happening but not regular. He did this to JM too but JM would have done this as a favour to a friend. But with KT, it was taking advantage.

read notes back to JM and he agreed they are an accurate account of what happened.

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Diary Excerpts

"1<sup>st</sup> August 2012 – I was shaky about moving to Lisburn given that I would be coming here alone, but Basil has convinced me it will be for the best."

"8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 – On Friday just passed we had a fundraiser for Basil and Friends Forever. It was alright. A bit stressful in terms of organising though. I felt I was dropped in the shit a bit about it, we had entertainment pull out, although to be fair, no one had properly sorted it.

Saturday's fundraiser raised some questions about my job, and especially so given that I got a heads up from [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] had been offered my job."

"Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 – I won't be the right person to do it [organise a tea dance], it won't be a success, and I will get the blame again. Is it any wonder I hate my job...

It's got to the point where I hate coming to work. I used to love coming to work. I took two days off sick last week because I simply didn't want to be in work, I haven't done that in years.

Basil and I have not spoken now in weeks. He called on Thursday night when I was ill, but we did not speak properly. Basil has gone from being one of my closest friends to barely more than an acquaintance."

"Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012 – Basil and I spoke a few weeks ago. I told him I wanted to leave him. He took it quite well, but I've been exiled to the constituency. I've been working from home and I hate it, I'm losing my social life."

"Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013 – Since my last entry I have left Basil. I've decided to take up a position at the [REDACTED] to study journalism.

Basil gradually marginalised me and turned me into a constituency worker, very frustrating. It became clear to me that he is not the great man I once thought he was. He is egotistical, manipulative and has no respect for others. It got to the point where all staff were feeling like this. Karen took a long time off on work related stress because of Basil's bad moods. Unfortunately John McCallister has been pushed out too. The new party risked falling apart before it even took off.

Evidence has been stacking up from those closest to Basil that he's been having an affair. I saw some of the early signs before I left when looking at his direct messages on twitter. He'd been sending a few racey messages back and forth to young women. Now though, it looks like it's Ashleigh [Murray] he's been having a fling with, plenty of little tell-tale signs suggest this; they have a very strange relationship."

Carecall Statement – rewritting to clarify grammatical errors.

## Interview Record

### Appendix (JM)

Case reference number: NI21 010-05-14-CS

Name of Investigator:

Name of Note taker:

Person interviewed: Jamie Mackrell (JM) by telephone

Others present: None

Venue: Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast

Date: 23rd May 2014

Objective of interview: To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.

Abbreviations: Basil McCrea (BMcC), Karen Tabahe (KT), Ashleigh Murray (AM), [REDACTED]

## Record of interview:

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3.7 In BMcC's speech, he began building up the person who had worked hard at event, and then named someone else – JP, who had only done a bit of the work. All of the room had expected it to be JM. He received no thanks or appreciation, in fact BMcC was annoyed as he had wanted more.

3.8 JM's mum emailed BMcC to say how disappointed she was, JM never confronted BMcC, JM didn't think it was a big deal and would have been fine but it was obviously an issue for BMcC.

3.9 JM advised that BMcC is a bully shouting at everyone in the office, KT got the worst of it, JM didn't have to deal him in the constituency.

3.10 The slightest thing would set him off. Stressful. Provided example of travel arrangements [when Basil was in Europe and was calling from abroad to get directions and other travel arrangements], BMcC would call every 5 minutes, shouting, very intimidating.

3.11 Always on call for BMcC, example [of how anxious I was if Basil were to call] JM on a day off, he was driving and heard a bang, he jumped as he thought it was BMcC calling.

3.12 It became so tense, but not at the beginning when BMcC was so generous with his time. Felt like a square peg in a round hole.

3.13 BMcC said "we should have been more honest that it wasn't working."

3.14 Pay issue – BMcC wanted to give JM more money so that JM could give it back to him. JM advised that he was paid through the office cost allowance. It was put through as pay increase, but JM didn't give him any money – he was going to.

3.15 JM was on minimum wage – approx. £250 per week (£14,500). The increase was £100 per month.

[Clarification of pay arrangements: I was salaried for 40 hours per week at £7.08 per hour. The agreement was that £6.08 (minimum wage at the time) was for me and the extra £1 per hour was for Basil. I received £1045.82 after tax, and of that I owed Basil £173.33.]

3.16 BMcC asked him to do this, to give it back to him in cash [or buy meals], BMcC wanted extra money as expenses and saw this money as his that he couldn't unlock.

3.17 When JM left, BMcC got him to pay a consultant (Icon Creative PR Firm). JM was charged with getting leaflets drawn up, BMcC had said go down and sort leaflets. JM went, gave overview. When consultant gave work, BMcC wasn't happy and JM had to go back at least twice.

3.18 When bill arrived, BMcC wasn't happy "why have you cost me all this money?" BMcC wouldn't pay. Icon kept calling for payment, if JM brought up the subject with BMcC, his mood would change and he would go mad, thought it should be free.

3.19 When JM left, BMcC paid holiday pay, but said that JM had to cover [the full] payment of leaflets as BMcC said it was his fault.

3.20 BMcC deducted the leaflet invoice payment from JM holiday pay

3.21 3rd May 2013 letter "£384.00 for service initiated by me."

3.22 3rd May 2013 , 2nd letter to state that JM got holiday pay until 17th May

3.23 JM to take picture and send. [This picture was sent on 23/05/2014]

3.24 AM – there was talk within Stormont about AM & BMcC. Strange relationship – seemed very close – picking up directly, dropping off. JM had suspicions but gave BMcC the benefit of the doubt (JM and BMcC had been friends at beginning).

3.25 Strange – blinds in BMcC office always open, one day BMcC and AM working late and blinds were shut.

3.26 October 2013 - JM back home visiting and AM told him about affair with BMcC ( asked for clarification and JM confirmed it was of a sexual nature), that it went on for months. AM told him at the start of a night out in Laverys, can't remember details. JM was not aware if it was still going, AM didn't seem too happy that it had gone on.

3.27 At the day of the party conference, all were there and saying that his behaviour had got worse.

3.28 For KT it was worse, she was a verbal punch bag for BMcC.

3.29 That night, JM tried to confront BMcC, felt ashamed of how he had let BMcC treat him [I knocked on Basil's door at the Europa, but he didn't answer]. BMcC made it clear he was the one who paid wages, he knew what levers to pull, and made it known he was the boss. All the team put in hours above and beyond. "this is politics, you have to understand, not 9am-5pm."

3.30 JM had plans [with my daughter on a Saturday which I had as part of an agreement with her mother] and BMcC said "I need you here" JM had to bring his daughter. [This happened often].

3.31 JM aware that BMcC asked KT for lifts but did not provide petrol money, JM recalls it happening but not regular. He did this to JM too but JM would have done this as a favour to a friend. But with KT, it was taking advantage.

read notes back to JM and he agreed they are an accurate account of what happened.

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

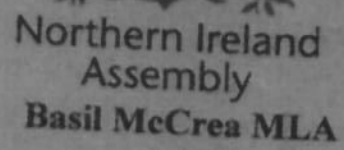
4.1 reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.

4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.

4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.







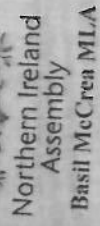
**Constituency Office**  
**19 Market Square**  
**Dromore**  
**Co Down**  
**BT25 1AW**

I undertake to pay the sum of £384 to ICON Creative for services initiated by me.

**Jamie Mackrell**

Witnessed by:





1153-1159

I undertake to pay the sum of £384 to ICON Creative for services initiated by me.

100

Witnessed by:

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 May 2014 11:19  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: ICON Letter

Hi [REDACTED],

Please see below.

Thanks  
Fiona

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jamie Mackrell [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 28 May 2014 11:13:42 BST  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: ICON Letter

Hi Fiona,

Here's the e-mail I need to send to [REDACTED], my e-mail is blocking though.

Thanks,

Jamie

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Jamie Mackrell [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Fri, May 23, 2014 at 2:57 PM  
**Subject:** ICON Letter  
**To:** [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Apologies for the delay, I had some trouble sending the picture from my phone. Hopefully this should reach you now.

If you need anything else, just let me know!

Thanks,

Jamie Mackrell  
[REDACTED]

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**Appendix (NM)****Interview Record**

**Case reference number:** NI21 001-05-14-CS

**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]

**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]

**Person interviewed:** Nigel Macauley (NM)

**Others present:** None

**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St. Belfast

**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014

**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment

**Abbreviations:** Basil McCree (BMCC), John McCallister (JMCC), [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED] Peter Hutchinson (PH), [REDACTED]  
 Kirsty McClellan (KMCC)

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1** [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2** The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.



- [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

## 2.0 Opening Comments

- 2.1 NM feels there are some issues, complaint of bullying & harassment against BMcC.

## 3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 Background: officially started with party on 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 2014. Prior to this NM had been doing ad-hoc work for JMcC. They were in the UUP together, they met re: the foundation of the party and set up. Employed to oversee elections.

- 3.2 Example:

On second week of work, BMcC returned from holidays. He demanded to see NM's contract, he was swearing, [REDACTED] and PH were present too. He began going through contract and job description, it was very intimidating as he went through this, stating that NM couldn't do.... Conversations had about NM's appointment. BMcC was not happy about it. BMcC said "Not even the entire White House could do what's on this job description"

JMcC rang NM, BMcC insisted that NM take the call but was abusive about JMcC stating "If JMcC was F\*\*king here, I'd pin him to the wall and knee him in the b\*lls." In an attempt to lighten the mood NM had advised JMcC "Next time you see BMcC wear a cup".

NM was not sure how to take BMcC. He was in there for two hours, it is very blurred, [REDACTED] and PH sat there. NM was very grateful to PH who interjected to say the matter was between JMcC and BMcC. NM felt supported by PH who was helpful and NM was glad that he was there.

Party Secretary [REDACTED] was keen on NM's appointment "we need you" [REDACTED] had met NM prior to appointment, she was keen on it but almost denied it "Idea was great, but BMcC should have done it."

- 3.3 Example:

Recalls going to BMcC office, wanted to deal with website. BMcC swearing profusely. NM stopped him at that point, said no need to swear. BMcC said "Where do you think you are? Not F\*\*king Kindergarten now". NM asked him to stop and BMcC asked him to leave. NM thinks that KMcC may have been present.

- 3.4 Example:

Went to BMcC office regarding Google Drive. NM thought meeting was going well as they went through it all.

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At end of meeting, BMcC said he could set up email, NM said he would coordinate the Electoral Communication Plan. BMcC demeanour changed "I'm the Leader, I decide"

NM asked what it is in relation to the Electoral Communication Plan and BMcC replied "It's a secret"

NM saw little of BMcC after above incident. NM felt BMcC didn't like him but was never given a reason why – personal?

3.5 Example:

NM was invited to two party conferences – seemed fine. NM learned not to contribute at the first meeting (█████ office).

At the Second meeting, █████ was giving NM a lift so he waited after the meeting which was at █████'s house. They were still there two hours later. BMcC said to NM "You're young, you'll learn, you'll get there." Degrading words and attitude, NM feeling not worthwhile and made to feel not good enough. It was patronising.

3.6 NM fed back that he felt it would be inappropriate for the report to go to █████ – it would be sent to BMcC and the rest of the executive.

4 Closing Comments

4.1 █████ reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.

4.2 █████ reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.

4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

4.4 Meeting ended at 11.30am.

Signed:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



JM<sup>c</sup>C8

**McCallister, John**

---

**From:** Peter Hutchinson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 July 2014 22:37  
**To:** McCallister, John  
**Subject:** Statement  
**Attachments:** Final N121 006-05-14-CS PH - requested notes .pdf

Hi Annette

Apologies for slow response.

Please find attached my notes from carecall - they are not a great reflection of what I said - but at this stage they will corroborate others.

Paragraph 3.19 is incorrect - CB received an email from Basil and informed me of the content of that email on the day I gave evidence to carecall.

Password is [REDACTED]

Thanks

Peter



***Interview Record***

**Case reference number:** NI21 006-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Peter Hutchinson (PH)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Nigel Macauley (NM), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister (JMcC), Complainant B (CB), Ashleigh Murray (AM), Conor Clements (CC), [REDACTED]

**Record of interview:**

**1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1** [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2** The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
  - [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.



## **2.0 Opening Comments**

### **2.1 Witness to inappropriate behaviour**

Background: worked with JMcC and BMcC in UUP. Left in 2011 to join NICVA. In summer 2013 JMcC asked PH to come back to the new party. Began in August 2013 after party launched as Head of Policy. Line Manager of FMcA, and line managed by JMcC. PH thought he would be a senior member of staff, this didn't happen, dealing with the circumstances dealt to him.

There are issues with party, including lack of capacity to get built up and function. Some issues seem to pre-date party.

PH is not here to complain but to comment on inappropriate and strange behaviour.

No secret that BMcC and JMcC having issues, but that is part of politics.

## **3.0 Detail of Allegations**

- 3.1 PH has been aware of rumours for a while, no time or date. Incident in Cork regarding CB but wasn't present himself.
- 3.2 PH has been briefing Team [REDACTED] and working with [REDACTED]. At a briefing on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April, there were rumours of tweets from [REDACTED] people were discussing it. [REDACTED] asked if she could speak to CB.
- 3.3 Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May – JMcC phoned PH and advised about the constituent. Heard about the sexual harassment, there was a break in papers. Person was able to name things they shouldn't be able to.
- 3.4 CB working from PH office but not line managed by him. PH was on phone to JMcC. CB told PH that BMcC groped her in Cork. FMcA was there, CB told them both there was an incident with AM and BMcC asked if was ok to touch her legs.
- 3.5 1<sup>st</sup> May afternoon – BMcC called to see PH, told him what was going in JMcC's office, but JMcC was not there. BMcC asked for advice. PH couldn't as not enough info. BMcC asked who it might be – FMcA? CB?
- 3.6 BMcC asked PH to bring FMcA down. PH didn't know her extension. BMcC called her mobile to bring her to office. BMcC asked her who she thought it could be. It was bizarre and strange.
- 3.7 BMcC said he didn't line manage CB anymore. PH had knowledge that [REDACTED] was helping with "HR problems."
- 3.8 PH worked quite closely with BMcC and JMcC. JMcC would call PH, advised due to role
- 3.9 Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> May – JMcC's room. CB was there too. Asked how she was. CB said that [REDACTED] called her the previous night and said if stories came out it would impact on her campaign.
- 3.10 PH advised JMcC that it was all very strange and needed to do something.

- 3.11 Relations in party, especially senior, are very poor. Not capable of managing it. Conversations about Carecall.
- 3.12 Monday – BMcC getting info and speaking to CC, BMcC & [REDACTED] tweets. BMcC and [REDACTED] talked to the Telegraph and other journalists, BMcC on the phone to JMcC about Carecall.  
This was not overt. Asked questions. Under suspicion. Asked about who it might be. BMcC about to say he didn't line manage these people but stopped himself short.
- 3.13 [REDACTED] pulled PH up about line management, she forwarded email to PH about line management.
- 3.14 PH went to BMcC room and advised how unhappy he was about how he and FMcA were treated.  
BMcC said he trusted them, that he was talking as a friend.  
It was uncomfortable and unpleasant.
- 3.15 [REDACTED] – PR Person. There was a fallout and he is dragging stuff up. This has catalysed the situation. He has had a hand in this. Before this, he was critical of the party. PH wondered why they bothered with him.
- 3.16 PH works in a different office, no witness of anything sexual. No witness to anything to do with AM as he worked in a different office.
- 3.17 Direct experience of inappropriate behaviour – NM.  
There was a meeting with BMcC, [REDACTED] PH & NM, it was a strange meeting, came across as if NM were in the dock for being employed, that he was in an unpleasant position not of his doing. Saying he wasn't appropriate, wouldn't let NM do work. PH was under impression that [REDACTED] okayed NM employment but meeting suggested that she hadn't.
- 3.18 PH told FMcA to work from home – concerned about experience of Monday, and also recommended that CB work from home as she is ill.
- 3.19 PH received an email today from BMCC about one to one meetings and annual reviews. CB said she wanted to attend Carecall and BMcC said she didn't need to, he would arrange something.

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DATA SUBJECT COPY

Messages

Annette Holden

Edit

Sorry Peter. Last message was for Kathy :-0

29 Jul 2014 11:42

Hi Peter, hope you are keeping well. Sorry to trouble you but could you let me have your Carecall statement please. I believe John spoke with you to explain why we need it. We've until 6th August to respond with details and as John is third party complainant Bain said he will accept the statements to support John's justification. Cheers.



iMessage

Send



*Appendix (AH)****Interview Record***

**Case reference number:** NI21 009-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Annette Holden (AH)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Karen  
 Tabahe (KT), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister  
 (JMcC), Complainant B (CB), [REDACTED], Ashleigh  
 Murray (AM), Kathy Wilson (KW), Kirsty McClea (KMCC),  
 Nigel Macauley (NM) [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.

1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:

- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
- The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
- Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
- Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.



- [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
- [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

## 2.0 Opening Comments

- 2.1 Has worked with JMcC for 7 years in UUP & NI21 – Legal Policy Advisor.
- 2.2 Employed Full Time by JMcC at Stormont and Newcastle Office
- 2.3 Involved with BMcC through JMcC, they used to have offices that connected
- 2.4 This is not a personal complaint about BMcC but complaining on behalf of KT as aware of this due to proximity of office – no dates/times.

## 3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 When KT first started, AH gave assistance, they had a friendly working relationship, KT confided in AH.
- 3.2 KT enjoyed her job at the beginning and had complete loyalty to BMcC but things began to change. AH noticed her demeanour and behaviour, she was less willing to openly praise BMcC
- 3.3 Approx. Jan 2013, KT advised AH that she was finding it difficult. AH became aware. Came into office in tears.
- 3.4 AH's time at office began to diminish but when she was there, KT confided how horrible he was.
- 3.5 February/March was much worse – BMcC got new staff (Staff would come and go frequently, no structures – volunteers? Paid?)
- 3.6 AH advised KT she needed to deal with this and advised of assembly grievance procedure. KT was frightened. AH said she could talk to JMcC who was his friend but KT said no. AH encouraged her to keep a diary.
- 3.7 AH felt guilty but she had no control.
- 3.8 Got so bad at the inception of NI21 (when [REDACTED] came on board) that KT lived in fear of BMcC, he would severely criticise her and reduce her to tears in front of people. Once this happened in front of JMcC and it was so bad that JMcC called her after, and had to talk to BMcC about his treatment of staff (and NM too).
- 3.9 [REDACTED] tried to manage BMcC's staff "who gets what?" and "who can we get rid of" [REDACTED] was highly critical of AH and KT. [REDACTED] FMcA was more in touch with KT then, FMcA felt under pressure to help. KT was pushed out to Lisburn – felt out of the loop.
- 3.10 Appalling how KT was treated.
- 3.11 AH thought she had a case for constructive dismissal, AH has a law degree and specialised in employment law.
- 3.12 In December 2013 before Christmas, KT was called to an executive meeting (Present: BMcC, JMcC, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]) to attend when she is not an executive, AH was there as a member. KT was left hanging around, called in but don't know what for, KT waited and waited and the [REDACTED] advised "You can go now."
- 3.13 At above meeting KT said she was in a good place now and that she would like to talk to AH over Christmas to see where she would go from there. [REDACTED]

## 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 ■■■ reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 ■■■ reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DATA SUBJECT COPY



JM<sup>c</sup>C10

Ms A Holden LLB (Hons)  
C/O 29a Central  
Promenade  
NEWCASTLE  
BT33 0AA

Mr Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

30 July 2014

Dear Mr Bain

I wish to submit an addendum to my Carecall statement which is being included in John McCallister's complaint about Basil McCrea's treatment of his staff. My reason for doing so is that I believe the statement does not contain sufficient information to illustrate the extent of abusive treatment that Mrs Karen Tabahe has endured during her employment with Mr McCrea and the very serious and detrimental effect this has had on her health and wellbeing.

The information that I have provided in this addendum is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and I am willing to swear on oath that this is the case. I trust therefore that you will give due consideration to this document when considering the details of Mr McCallister's complaint.

Yours sincerely



Annette Holden LLB(Hons)



**Addendum to Carecall Statement of Annette Holden**  
**In relation to Karen Tabahe**

1. I have been employed as a legal adviser and research officer on a full time basis by John McCallister MLA since July 2007. My early role meant that I was spending most of my time in his office in Parliament Buildings. This was at a time when both he and Mr McCrea were members of the UUP and their offices were next to each other with an internal connecting door. Mr McCrea still occupies the same office.

2. I think it was 2008 that I became acquainted with Karen Tabahe when she started working for Mr McCrea as his PA based in his Parliament Buildings office situated next to John McCallister's. At the start of her employment Karen would frequently seek me out for guidance and advice on a variety of issues relating to her employment and the workings of the Assembly. As we got to know each other we struck up a personal friendship and after settling in to her role, Karen would always call in and see me whenever I was in Parliament Buildings. She confided in me about her personal life and trusted me with particularly personal information. At the start of her employment Karen was extremely enthusiastic and would waste no time in telling me how much she loved her job. She was always ebullient and had nothing but praise for Mr McCrea. She was extremely loyal to him although she did frequently comment about the pressure he put her under.

3. Around October 2008 there was a change in staffing arrangements with John McCallister's constituency office and I was required to take over as Office Manager; this meant I was in Parliament Buildings less frequently. On the occasions I was there I would make a point of calling in to see Karen but noticed a change in her attitude. It wasn't personally towards me; more that she was terrified to be seen away from her desk or not working. I often asked if she was alright and she would just make a throw away comment or two about how hard Basil drove her but that she still loved her job. As my role changed and I coped with my own heavy workload I thought nothing more of this and other than the odd work-related phone call or bumping into Karen briefly in the corridors of Stormont I had no cause to come into contact with her.

4. It was late 2012 when I really noticed a change in Karen. She told me that Basil was being extremely nasty to her and she felt that she was being "pushed out". She became extremely nervous to the point of not being able to function properly. She told me that staff were coming and going in Basil's office; that she was expected to be in control but was not being informed of things that in her role she would ordinarily expected to have been. She was becoming noticeably critical of Basil and his treatment of her but was terrified of him and of losing her job. I advised her that she should not ignore this as it would only get worse if left unchecked. I reminded her of her employment rights and I asked if she wanted me to either try and speak with Basil or have a word with John to speak with him.





This was difficult because neither I nor John had any control over Basil's employees but I was sufficiently concerned to want to do something. Karen asked me not to at that time but she would try and deal with it herself. I suggested she starts keeping a diary of the date and nature of Basil's behaviour and if at any time she needed someone to talk to or to act for her, I would help any way I could.

5. Sometime in January 2013 I was working from Stormont when Karen came into my office in tears. She appeared to be totally broken. She told me how Basil would scream at her in front of other staff members. He humiliated her publicly, criticising everything she did to the point where she couldn't articulate her thought into coherent speech. She would shake uncontrollably and was so affected she had lost every shred of confidence in her abilities. I was very concerned about her and again asked her if I could take any action on her behalf. I stressed that this cannot continue for the sake of her own health and wellbeing but she again asked me not to do anything.

6. In February/March 2013 Basil's office had more reason for contact with us in John's office as both John and Basil had by then left the UUP and although had not formed NI21 at that stage, were working closely together in progression of the new Party. Karen would phone our office several times daily and would often be in tears. I took some of the calls but my colleague Kathy Wilson would answer the phone for the most part. It became apparent that Basil's treatment of Karen was having a serious detrimental impact on her.

7. She told me during one conversation that she was finding it very difficult to continue in her job. She felt undermined constantly by Basil who at that stage I believe was doing his best to force her out. It got so bad for Karen that around Easter time 2013 she had to take some time off sick with stress. When she did come back she found that her role as PA had been permanently reallocated to someone else and that she was made to feel most unwelcome in her own place of employment.

8. At no time did Basil try to speak with Karen in order to identify and resolve the work-related stress issues. Instead he continued to treat her with utter contempt and would openly criticise and belittle her to other staff members and in front of them. I know for sure that John McCallister witnessed one event in April last year where Basil was so nasty and aggressive to Karen that John felt compelled to phone her later to see how she was and to let her know that he had "had words" with Basil about his outburst. Karen had rung me to tell me about the incident and that John had spoken with her afterwards. She was very upset and was unsure if she was going to be able to remain in Basil's employment.



9. From June 2013 up to Christmas, Karen persevered with the situation but would talk to me frequently about how she was practically exiled; Kirsty McClay had replaced her as PA and would not include or involve Karen in any of the office administration. Instead, Karen was given nonsensical tasks to do from home. At one point Basil was trying to get her to move to the Lisburn office. She told me that she felt isolated and demeaned. I felt that because she was contracted to work as his PA from Stormont, Basil was attempting to change her terms unilaterally which is unacceptable under the circumstances. I know that NI21 Chair at that time, [REDACTED] was getting involved in staffing issues and had suggested moving Karen out of Stormont or in fact getting rid of her entirely. This had been discussed during at least one Executive meeting. I advised Karen that she could possibly have a case for constructive dismissal if she decided to leave and that if she wouldn't let me or anyone else take action for her, she should give serious consideration to taking action herself in this regard. I again offered to provide as much guidance, advice and support that I possibly could. She appeared grateful and said she would consider her options.

10. Just before Christmas, on or about 13<sup>th</sup> December 2013, I was attending an NI21 Executive meeting (I was an elected member) and Karen had been called to attend the same meeting by the Chair. We were left hanging around for some time prior to the meeting starting and Karen made a point of speaking with me away from the other attendees. She told me that she was now "in a good place" and that she was ready to stand up for herself and take action against Basil. She confirmed to me that from my suggestion she had indeed been keeping a diary and she asked if I would be willing to meet with her during the Christmas break to discuss how she should proceed. I confirmed that I would and all she had to do was let me know where and when. [REDACTED]

11. I had very limited contact with Karen again until I met her in the Carecall offices in May this year. John McCallister had instigated the process on the back of persistent rumours in relation to Mr McCrea's alleged sexual inappropriate behavior; rumours that I was very familiar with from as far back as February this year. Like myself, Karen had voluntarily come forward to speak with Carecall and she took me to one side and advised me that she had told them everything. She said that she had not mentioned me by name to Carecall but had told the interviewer that other staff members would be able to support her complaints either as witnesses or as confidantes. As I was someone she had confided in she wanted to let me know as a courtesy.



12. I truly believe that by subjecting Karen Tabahe to frequent bouts of bullying, humiliating and aggressive behaviour, by undermining her confidence and attempting to isolate her from her work, place Basil McCrea has failed to meet the required standards of a Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly. He has failed to uphold the principles of The Code of Conduct, demonstrating a total disregard for the need to act at all times with respect and integrity. He has also failed to show leadership through his indifferent attitude to the effects his behaviour was having on his staff, instead passing the problems of his creation on to others to resolve when it should have been his responsibility and his alone.





**Appendix (KW)****Interview Record**

**Case reference number:** NI21 008-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Kathy Wilson (KW)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), Karen Tabahe (KT), John McCallister (JMcC), Annette Holden (AH), Kirsty McClea (KMcC),

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
  - [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

## **2.0 Opening Comments**

- 2.1 Works in JMcC office in Newcastle, employed full time by JMcC, his line manager. KW only attends Stormont quarterly. Her role is admin officer for the last three years, she was with UUP and stayed with JMcC after the split.
- 2.2 KW is here today about BMcC inappropriate behaviour towards KT, she does the same job for BMcC as KW does for JMcC so they would have had a lot of telephone contact

## **3.0 Detail of Allegations**

- 3.1 In February 13 – JMcC resigned from UUP and BMcC the following day, then KW and KT came into regular daily contact, KW noticed how unhappy KT was, and pressure she was under, she was unable to ask BMcC anything regarding diary events, this led to her calling more than ten times daily to check as she was paranoid about making mistakes.
- 3.2 This behaviour above went on until the launch in June when new staff member was brought in – KMcC.
- 3.3 KT was deeply unhappy as she felt forced out, she felt she had no place.
- 3.4 BMcC made her life hell, it had an impact on her mental health, she would call KW in tears or break down on the phone while trying to remain professional.
- 3.5 KT had periods of sickness because she couldn't cope.
- 3.6 KT was moved to Dromore, she was not happy about it but this was not her choice.
- 3.7 KW is aware of incident in Stormont as AH (she worked at Stormont once a week) called KW as there had been a rough incident, BMcC had screamed at KT, she had walked out, JMcC had to speak to BMcC.
- 3.8 At November conference, KW spoke with KT, said she didn't know why she was being excluded.

## **4.0 Closing Comments**

- 4.1 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

JM<sup>c</sup>C 12

John McCallister [REDACTED]

Call from [REDACTED] 5.5.14

John McCallister [REDACTED]

6 May 2014 08:41

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thank you for the update.

The reasons you outline are the very reasons that I have been asking for a formal meeting on these allegations and rumours since last week as I am fully aware that we do have a duty of care to our staff team and have been highlighting this since becoming aware of the situation. I am glad that you now realise the seriousness of this and the impact it could have on our staff team.

I was made aware of [REDACTED]'s tweets suggesting allegations against Basil McCrea on Tuesday 29th April. A constituent called and warned of serious allegations coming out against Basil on Thursday 1st May. Shortly after getting that message I called the acting chair [REDACTED] ( 14.43 for 20 mins ) and informed him of all I knew at this point. I also told him that I haven't been approached either formally or informally by anyone to make an allegation. I also informed him that we need to hold a formal meeting with minutes and proper documentation so that we have a proper record of our actions or indeed lack of them and suggested tomorrow ( fri 2th May ) I spoke to Basil at 15.16 for 30mins on thurs and to you at 19.55 for 26mins on Thursday evening. I followed this up with a text to you [REDACTED] and Basil on Friday morning to work out time .

**My text out at 10.19**

'Would today at Stormont at 2.30 suit to meet. '

**Basil's reply**

'Have to deliver PEB at 14:30. Just depends how quickly I can get that done. Ps what were you up to at the Errigle? Two separate reports. '

**[REDACTED]'s reply.**

'In work all day john - earliest I can meet is 5 in Dromore if we have to meet. Unless something comes out not sure there's a needful meet about a rumour - unless you know more. If we do have the meeting it would be useful if, as whip, you bring any policies and procedures that you think are held any and that would be useful - either party or assembly procedures/policies '

I did not receive a reply from you about the meeting. To my great disappointment this meeting did not happen nor did I or could I get any agreement to meet or discuss what action needed to be taken despite again highlighting our duty of care.

On Sat 3rd of May my only reason for making sure I attended the BBQ at your house was to discuss this issue and what actions needed to be taken.

I had a discussion with [REDACTED] on the lawn who again said that without an allegation and a person to make it there was nothing to be done. I highlighted the staff issues and said we must do something and suggested bringing Carecall in and doing a check on staff.

In the informal meeting with you, Basil, [REDACTED] and myself I again raised Carecall suggestion but you and [REDACTED] said annual assessments and monitoring should highlight problems. I strongly disagreed. As for management of staff. In my case I am responsible for Annette Holden and Kathy Wilson in my constituency office. Party staff I am Peter Hutchinson 's line manager and he is Fiona McAteer's I am also Nigel Macauley's line manager. Basil office staff are his responsibility and I understand he has mixed arrangements.

I have to state very clearly that your assertion that you have no involvement in staff management is a complete contradiction to what you said on Saturday. On Saturday you told me that you managed

[REDACTED]



Jacqueline and indeed still are managing her. Basil had asked you to do this last summer. Ashleigh was only managed by Basil for one month and then you took over that responsibility and Basil was quite clear about that on Saturday. Even though I didn't ask, want or need, you did start to manage Nigel and indeed complained at a party executive about the time you had wasted trying to manage him. Indeed you even complained about Fiona and Annette about not doing party stuff. So far from not being involved in managing staff I would say you were and are very heavily involved in it.

When I discussed my concerns with [REDACTED] last week I made it quite clear that you should not approach any of the staff to try and find out who may be making the allegations. I texted [REDACTED] to this effect only to hear that you had spoken with Jacqueline. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When I challenged you about this you told me you were asking if she was ok. What I heard elsewhere was that your only concern was the impact this might have on your campaign. Incidentally, I would like for you to clarify if you were ever made aware of an incident involving Basil allegedly conducting inappropriate behaviour towards a female staff member whilst in Cork?

[REDACTED]

I will be pleased to meet up today at 3pm as I think it is high time our party faced up to this and decided what needs to happen - always bearing in mind our duty of care! As for PSNI involvement - I am happy with this approach and we can discuss this at the meeting. I have asked Annette to attend the meeting in order to obtain a detailed and accurate record of proceedings.

John

Sent from my iPhone  
[Quoted text hidden]

[REDACTED]





John McCallister [REDACTED]

Call from [REDACTED] 5.5.14

To: John McCallister

6 May 2014 09:51

Cc: [REDACTED]

Thanks for your reply John. I am surprised by your many assertions. I do not and have not manged staff.

Re staffing I am not anyone's line manager.

Re your assertion around an issue on Cork. I am aware of an allegation however the individual came to me in confidence and asked me not to pursue.

Your timing etc around meetings, I suggest you take this up with the Chair. As you know I personally have an excellent record for meetings and time keeping.

Re the care call conversation I and have no issue with you dong what you feel appropriate in the situation with rumours. Seems from your email and previous conversations that staff may be unhappy. I do not manage Nigel however as Commnications Director I did engage with him.

The overriding feedback I have from part staff and executive is that the real issue is the fact that the leader and deputy leader simply cannot communicate and work as a team.

Re the [REDACTED] scenario we went from a situation of rumours online to a situation of an actual call with a potential threat. I definitely believe these are different scenarios hence my encouragement to invite the police.

On future I suggest all information. Is held in writing and of you have a concern with me or anyone else you out that in writing and not in an email like this.

Kind Regards

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]







JM'CB  
A

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JMC13B

ESS





JMCC 130







JMCC14

**McCallister, John**

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**From:** Neil McNickle [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2014 20:25  
**To:** McCallister, John  
**Subject:** Carecall investigation

Dear John,

Following the recent press coverage I felt I should make you aware of an incident which I believe occurred in either September or October last year. I am unable to remember the exact date.

Basil McCrea called me one evening and asked me 'to do him a favour'. He told me that Ashleigh Murray was creating a problem with poor time keeping and was constantly claiming that her bus was late.

He asked me if I would take a drive past [REDACTED] one morning around 9AM and see if Ashleigh was at bus stop. I told Basil I wouldn't do it as I didn't feel it was appropriate behaviour.

He attempted to persuade me by saying Ashleigh played on issues surrounding her father, who I believe was a [REDACTED] and that she 'constantly played on the issue and tried to use it for sympathy'. He further added that she had physiological issues.

I again refused and ended the call. At time I thought it strange but thought nothing more of it.

Kind Regards  
Neil McNickle

Sent from my iPhone



# HOLMES<sup>AM 1</sup> MOFFITT

Mr. Douglas Bain CBE TD,  
Northern Ireland Assembly  
Commissioner for Standards,  
Room 283,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Ballymiscaw,  
Stormont,  
Belfast,  
BT4 3XX.

SL/JT/

Our Ref

Your Ref

7th August 2014

Dear Sir,

Re: Our client – Ashleigh Murray,  
[REDACTED]

We are writing on behalf of our client to make a formal complaint to you under Sections 22-33 of the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Assembly Members' Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (General Procedures) Direction 2012 ("the General Procedures Direction").

We are attaching a copy of our client's Statement of Complaint hereto and look forward to acknowledgement of the Complaint within 5 working days from the date hereof.

Yours faithfully  
Holmes & Moffitt

*PP* [REDACTED]  
For Holmes & Moffitt Solicitors  
[REDACTED]



This is a statement made by Ashleigh Murray in support of a complaint against Mr. Basil McCrea MLA in relation to his breach of the Members Code of Conduct.

- 1) I first met Mr McCrea when I worked voluntry for The Princes Trust. He presented me with a certificate in Stormont, during the presentation we had to take a photo together, at this stage he put his arm round my waist and whispered in my ear, 'If we were seen in the newspapers together, we would cause such a stir'. This was my first time meeting a politician.
- 2) I later met Mr McCrea at a round table event in Stormont, again through The Princes Trust. We discussed what we as young people expected from politicians and Northern Ireland. After the event we were leaving and Mr McCrea pulled me to the side and said he would have a job for me in his office and to get in touch.
- 3) During a period of unemployment I contacted Basil through facebook and asked if he would have any employment opportunities in his office. I went to Mr McCreas office to meet him, finally after 3 times waiting to meet him, he showed up.
- 4) During my time working for Mr McCrea and NI21 I have witnessed incidents, heard about incidents and on occasions, very often, I would be subject of Mr McCreas' irrational behaviour.
- 5) On many an occasion I have had to listen to Mr McCrea talk derogatorily about a member/ex member of staff, Jamie Mckrell. He would ask my opinion on whether to fire Karen Tabahe, member of staff, committed for approximately 6 years. Blame John McCallister for their financial issues. Stand over and shout at [REDACTED] that she wasn't working quick enough and console my friend after she was groped by him at a work conference.
- 6) I brought these matters to the attention of any acting line manager at the time, [REDACTED] who was the then Chairperson of the Party. I also made Mr. [REDACTED] an ex employee of NI21 and Mr. Alan Patterson ex line manager of NI21 aware of my concers. When these issues were aired with Mr. McCrea he told them that he is was the boss and what he says goes. I also had a meeting with [REDACTED] in this regard but despite the concerns raised I received no support from her in this regard.
- 7) During my time working with Mr McCrea I was his 'Travelling PA', 'Events Co-Ordinator' and 'Constituency Officer'. I would have many private conversations with Mr McCrea about his personal life in which he disclosed information such as he did not love his partner anymore and was only with her because she owned the house and because it would look bad to the public. He explained to me that the people of Lisburn (his constituency) were no longer important. During these, and any other, conversations I was asked to switch my phone off as he thought I was recording our conversation. Mr McCrea lives in a world of paranoia, and rightly so, he knows he consistently manipulates and disrespects everyone on a daily basis.
- 8) Mr McCrea should not ever be in a position of power, he abuses this power. He abuses the trust of the people working for him and he betrays the trust of the UK Government. He is an absolute disgrace and every member of parliament should be ashamed to work along side him.
- 9) When I met Mr. McCrea through the Prince's Trust Mr. McCrea was aware of my background. He knew that I was vulnerable due to my lack of employment and I believe he took advantage of me. I was a young ambassador for the Prince's Trust and Mr. McCrea was often present when I was giving



speeches in which I outlined my upbringing. Mr McCrea knew I had a 'damaged' background, he knew I was vulnerable due to lack of employment and he took advantage. Mr McCrea listened to many a speech I gave about my upbringing and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] about my recent unemployment. He knew all this and he brought me on board with the promise of a career, voluntry at first, but paid in the future. When in fact my head was filled with sweetie mice, I was built up and torn back down again. Mr McCrea would tell people on a daily basis how talented and fantastic I was, this soon changed. Mr McCrea had me there for one reason and one reason only: eye candy. Mr. McCrea on many occasions made advances, stroked my leg, commented about my bottom. He made me feel like if I didn't accept this then I wouldn't progress within the party. Mr McCrea played on his power and his status as a MLA.

10) My first initial correspondence with Mr. McCrea, when I was seeking out work was through Facebook requesting employment. In the responses I received Mr. McCrea explained he had little money due to recently becoming an independent MLA and would not be able to pay me for a while. I agreed to come on board voluntary for a short term basis. This was in March 2013. I did not become a paid member of staff until 15<sup>th</sup> July 2013. During my time in a voluntary capacity I worked more than full time hours doing various roles within the party. During my time working voluntarily I approached Mr McCrea and explained I was struggling to pay my bills because I was working so much. It was made clear to me that if my dedication to my work waivered then I would suffer. I understood this to mean I would be treated with the typical 'Basil Behaviour' as others, such as, shouting at you, disrespecting you in front of other people and staff, giving you meaningless tasks to perform, or blatantly ignoring you.

11) Part of my role as Mr McCrea's 'Travelling PA' was to accompany him on meetings from morning until night. I would go wherever Mr McCrea went. He would pick me up in the morning and drop me off most evenings.

12) On approx. Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Of April 2013 Mr McCrea asked me to accompany him to a dinner meeting as part of my job role with a woman called [REDACTED]. During dinner Mr McCrea consumed two glasses of red wine. After dinner we left the Mac in Belfast St Anne's Cathedral and headed towards [REDACTED] to drop me home. While driving past the house of sport round about Mr McCrea started to rub my leg, this continued. Whilst doing this he crossed the white lines several times and unbeknown to him the police were following us. The police continued to follow and pulled Mr McCrea in at [REDACTED] car park. The police asked Mr McCrea if had been drinking, to this Mr McCrea lied and stated no he had not. When the police officer produced a Breathalyzer Mr McCrea admitted to drinking not two but one glass of wine. Mr McCrea passed the Breathalyzer and kept the mouthpiece provided. I was instructed not to discuss this with anyone.

13) During April 2013 Mr McCrea held a meeting in La Mon hotel for like-minded people to gather and discuss the new political party. After the meeting was over a lot of alcohol was consumed. Mr McCrea made advances towards me. I put this down to ill judgment and alcohol consumption. No sexual contact took place. That night I left and went home. Once these allegations came to light Suzanne Chalkley, who had at one stage been my acting line manager and who was also present at LA Mon on the same night, contacted me via Facebook. She informed me that Mr McCrea had made a pass at her too. Ms. Chalkley does not want to come forward in fear of a bad effect on her business. In the conversation Ms. Chalkley stated, 'I heard the night he tried it on with me he had been trying it on





with you at La Mon LOL'. This shows that not only had he attempted something with me he had tried his chances with another person.

14) When I started to work for Mr McCrea on a paid basis I explained to him that due to the location of the office I would not be able to be in until 10:30am. When [REDACTED] was writing up my 'contract' I was told it would have to say I was starting at ten not half ten due to reasons unbeknown to me. I thought this was a bit strange but agreed to it. I had discussed this with Mr McCrea at great length and he assured me this was fine. This turned out not to be fine. I was continuously questioned about my arrival time to the office, what time I left work each day. This questioning got so bad and intrusive that Mr McCrea thought it appropriate to hide in his car and wait for my bus to arrive at the station. When I came into work that morning Mr McCrea was waiting for me getting in. He questioned me about how I travelled to work that morning, what time my bus got in, and where I had been between 10:20 and 10:30. I told Mr McCrea I got a taxi that morning and I had been at People First handing in my timesheets as they have to be in before lunchtime. This was not good enough for Mr McCrea as a few days later I received a phone call from Karen Tabahe explaining Mr McCrea would like me to phone from the landline each morning to her mobile and when I left the office to document the times. I categorically refused to do this. I felt like I was being segregated and harassed by my boss. I was absolutely outraged by this and sent Mr McCrea a text message asking him to meet me when free. A few hours later Mr McCrea showed up alone. During this meeting I expressed my outrage and disgust that I wasn't being treated equally or like a trustworthy member of staff. I stated that I would certainly clock in and clock out if the correct systems were put into place. These were never implemented. Mr McCrea approached other members of staff and told them that I was always late in, I wasn't pulling my weight and wasn't doing what I was told. This in my opinion all comes back to harassment and bullying in the workplace. [REDACTED] was present when I received the phone call from Karen Tabahe informing me of the new rules for me.

15) Alan Patterson had been brought on board by Mr McCrea to help manage staff on a day to day basis. He had been assigned to myself to help bring structure and help with what my role and duties were to be. When I was told I was moving to the Lisburn office I was instructed by Mr McCrea to get furniture out of storage from a company called VSL in Lisburn. On the day we were moving into the office there was a lot of extremely heavy furniture delivered, I organized for [REDACTED] to help move this up 3 flights of stairs. Once I had done this and got all the furniture in Mr McCrea came round and said he had never organized this. I told him he was wrong, that he had given me the details of the company and told me to bring round the furniture. During conversations with Mr Patterson I had expressed my frustration with Mr McCrea but did not think anything of it as it was a passing comment and not an official complaint. A few days later I received a phone call from Mr McCrea telling me he was coming to get me. I asked what was wrong but was told he would explain later. When Mr McCrea picked me up he informed me I had placed a complaint about him and Alan would like a meeting. I told Mr McCrea I had not placed a complaint about him. Mr McCrea then asked me what I was going to say. I told him I was going to say we had our issues but they are now resolved as we had spoken about them. I was instructed not to say anything in regards to this, I had to say everything was fine and I had no issues. Mr McCrea put me in an uncomfortable position and put me on the spot with his line of questioning. Since this incident I have come to discover that Alan Patterson did not call a meeting. When Mr Patterson came on board Mr McCrea thought he was the answer to everything; he praised him constantly and told us how he would bring structure to us. During Mr Patterson's 'employment' I witnessed him struggle to do his job, this was not due to Mr Patterson's ability but because of the lack of communication, co-operation, structure and clarity from Mr McCrea. Mr McCrea's attitude toward him changed quite soon, he would say things like Mr Patterson wasn't to be trusted, he couldn't do his



job properly and the staff didn't like him. This was not the case, Mr McCrea likes to discuss each staff member about the other and say things that are categorically not true. If Mr McCrea takes umbrage with you then he expected the rest of the staff to do so too'

16) During a rare visit to the Lisburn office Mr. McCrea and I had a few heated words in Bow Street. During this conversation I stated to Mr. McCrea that I would not stand being treated badly or being used. I stated that I would make sure everyone knew the truth if he didn't treat me correctly. To this Mr. McCrea got extremely uncomfortable. This conversation was quite loud on my behalf as to make other staff members aware that I had expressed my unhappiness with the treatment I was receiving. Other staff members were present that day.

17) When working in the Lisburn office I was in charge of its every day running. One task was to collect in money for the sale of T-Shirts and membership. I had an envelope with about £150 that was collected over a number of weeks. This envelope was stored in the back of the filing cabinet, only Mr McCrea knew this was there. In or about October 2013 I received a phone call telling me we needed money to pay a bill. I went to get the money from the filing cabinet only to discover it was gone. Upon discovering the money was missing, I did what I deemed appropriate procedure and notified my acting line manager Suzanne Chalkley about this. At this stage there was no security on the office door, even though I had brought it to Mr McCrea's attention and emailed Suzanne Chalkley about the issue. I contacted Suzanne Chalkley at the time and informed her the money was missing, she was acting manager at the time. I contacted the Stormont office and asked them had anyone taken the money. After searching the office for about a week I was going to approach Mr McCrea to inform him the money was missing when I was told Mr McCrea had in fact come into the office, taken the money and not said to anyone. In regards to the security of the office, I had informed the correct people the office was not secure with sensitive documents lying about. This issue was not resolved until I went to the local hardware store, used my own money and contacted a locksmith to get advice on how to fix the lock.

18) When you are part of a political party you are given assigned funds to help with the day to day running of the office within Stormont. These funds, under no circumstances, should be used to fund NI21 party work or PR etc. When working in the Lisburn office I was instructed by Mr McCrea to print out invites on 300 or more assembly headed paper and envelopes paid for out of his office cost allowance. I picked these up myself from the stationary store in Stormont. People assigned to this take were myself, [REDACTED] (Dromore Office), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Mr McCrea was advised not to do this several times as it wasn't allowed. This is another example of how Mr McCrea thinks the rules of law do not apply to him. This is a clear violation of the stipulations laid out by Stormont.

19) Mr McCrea would make advances on me and feel bum, legs etc. He would make sexual comments about me. This started from about two weeks after I started working for him until approx. May/June time. Mr McCrea made me feel like this was something I had to put up with and it came with the territory. I witnessed many a situation with Mr McCrea leering at women and it seemed like the normal practice; see something, say nothing. Mr. McCrea once took me for dinner late one night to a Chinese restaurant in Belfast city Centre. During conversations with Mr McCrea he told me that if I were to ever mention this to anyone then he would destroy me. I later came to realize that Mr McCrea was keeping what he classed as evidence against me, please see photo attached.

20) On my day of leaving NI21 I was on Mr. McCrea's' Facebook page as I still had admin permission on the account. I was looking through messages from myself and Mr. McCrea and soon discovered that



Mr. McCrea had deleted any messages he sent to me but kept all the messages I sent to him. After I left the party a friend who still worked for the party emailed me a picture that was found on Mr. McCrea's personal computer, again she had all access to these computers and folders. The picture was of a screenshot of Mr. McCrea's computer screen that contained more screenshots of messages I sent Mr. McCrea or pictures of my personal Facebook page. I believe Mr. McCrea was saving these to use as a rebuttal if any of these allegations came to light.

21) Since these allegations have come to light Mr. McCrea has attempted to blacken my name through the media using my past as his defence. When I first decided to come forward I did not know where to turn, I felt I couldn't trust John McCallister as he is Deputy Leader of the party so I made contact with a gentleman called [REDACTED] at the Newsletter, I was advised that this was the best direction to go at the time. Upon speaking with [REDACTED] I discovered that Mr. McCallister had indeed initiated steps with a company called Carecall. I requested [REDACTED] set up a meeting with Mr. McCallister but not disclose my identity. I met with Mr. McCallister the next day and informed him of everything that had happened during my employment. Mr. McCrea in the meantime had the allegations put to him by [REDACTED] he responded with a solicitor's letter stating that I was mentally unwell due to my past and everything I said was unreliable. I believe Mr. McCrea knew that this would anger and upset me, I believe he knew that I would react to this as we had many discussions about my past and how protective I was over not only myself but others who have went through similar experiences. After this I did an interview with the BBC confirming that there are allegations being put to Mr. McCrea. Mr. McCrea has continuously lied throughout this process, he had the allegations put to him by the Newsletter and then went straight to do The View and lied that he knew nothing of these allegations. After the BBC interview was released on Friday evening Mr. McCrea proceeded to do an interview with the Sunday Life detailing everything about my past, [REDACTED] Mr. McCrea proceeded to make reference to HANSARD to prove that I indeed said this about myself. Yes I may have said this, but I only ever gave speeches to people I felt comfortable with and knew wanted to make a difference to the young people of today.

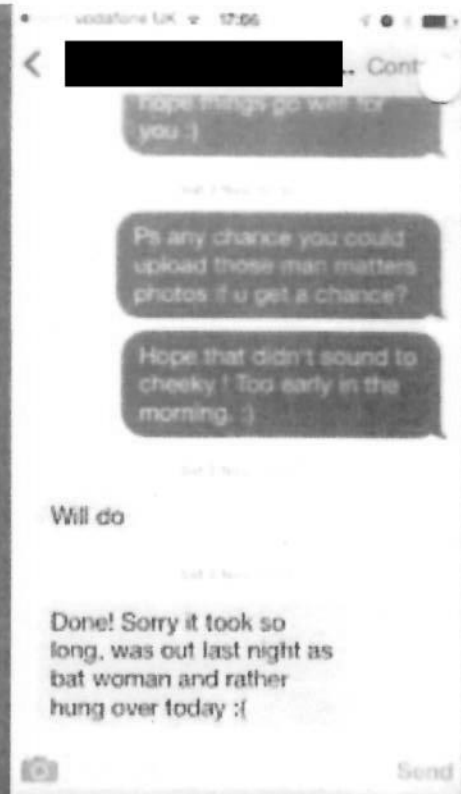
Signed

[REDACTED]

Dated 7/8/14



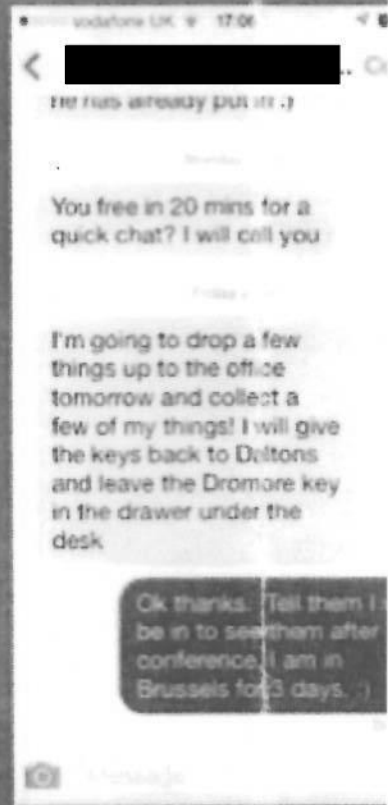
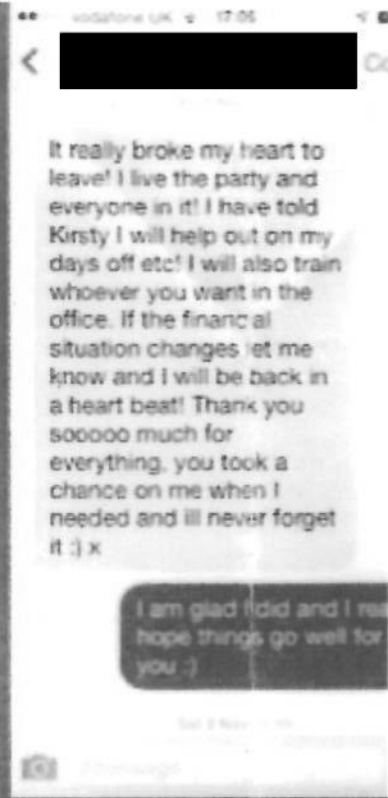
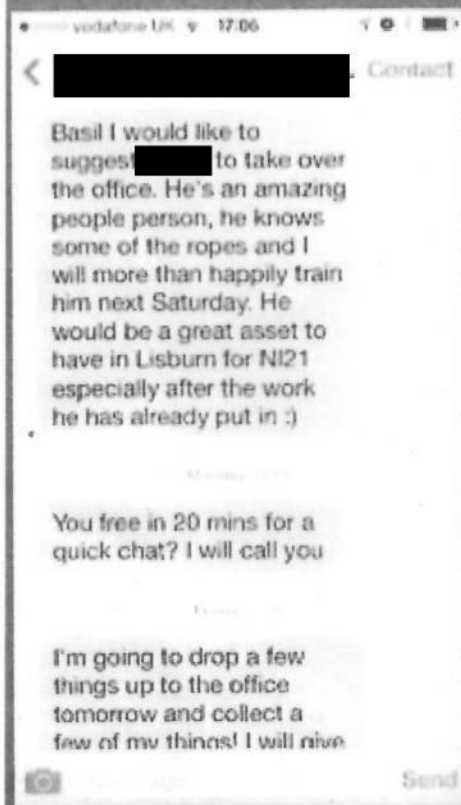




AM3











# HOLMES<sup>AM4</sup> MOFFITT

Mr. Douglas Bain CBE, TD Advocate,  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards,  
Room 283,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Ballymiscaw,  
Stormont,  
Belfast,  
BT4 3XX.

SL/JT/Murray/M

1<sup>st</sup> September 2014

Your Ref

Dear Sir,

**Re: Our client – Ashleigh Murray  
Complaint against Basil McCrea MLA**

Further to the above matter and in accordance with Paragraph 3.2 of the General Procedures Direction we wish to outline the breaches of the Code of Conduct as laid down in the Direction at paragraph 3.4 of the General Directions Procedures.

### Public Duty

With reference to the entire tenor of our client's statement and in particular to paragraphs 1 and 2 it is clear that Mr. McCrea abused his position of trust both in the community and with vulnerable volunteers with the Prince's Trust, to create a notion of security in the eyes of the complainant. This certainly is not in accordance with the public trust placed in him nor was it helping him to carry out the general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole. Certainly there are further elements outlined in the complaint and we would refer you in particular to paragraphs 9, 10 and 12 where it is clear that he did not comply with his duty to uphold the law on these occasions.

### Selflessness

The tenor of the Applicant's statement indicates that Mr. McCrea did not conduct himself in a way of furthering public interest but rather by way of self serving acts to promote his own position. This is particularly evident in the fact that Mr. McCrea, following the various attempts to bring matters concerning staff and other issues to his attention, was not interested in dealing with these matters. We refer you to paragraphs 4, 5 and 6.



### Integrity

Mr. McCrea did not act with integrity in the sense of portraying qualities of being honest and morally firm. Certainly in the light of those matters alluded to in paragraphs 12 and 13, this was far from the truth and is not the type of behaviour which a member of the Assembly should be engaging in whilst also abusing a position of trust with an employee.

### Accountability

It is clear from paragraph 7, 8, 20 & 21 that Mr. McCrea felt himself beyond scrutiny by any party member and certainly did not feel that he was accountable for his actions and his decisions, to the people of Northern Ireland.

### Openness

It is clear that there was a degree of subterfuge surrounding all dealings with Mr. McCrea and indeed the steps taken by him as outlined at paragraph 20 show that he more than anything does not wish for any of his actions to be exposed nor the nature of his true intentions towards our client, to become known.

### Honesty

It is clear that Mr. McCrea, in relation to his entire dealing with our client, has behaved in a dishonest manner. We also refer you to paragraphs 17 & 18 in her statement in relation to dishonesty as regards finances.

### Leadership

It is clear that Mr. McCrea, rather than lead his party and members of his staff with integrity, he has abused his position of leadership. All aspects of our client's statement are relevant in this regard.

### Promoting good relations

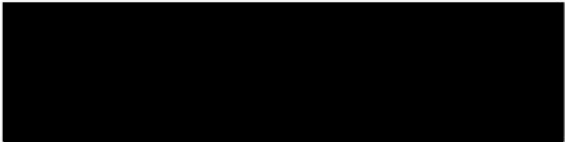
There is a clear lack of respect by Mr. McCrea in relation to not only our client but in relation to other members of his working team as evidenced in our client's statement. It is clear that he has not promoted a good working relationship between himself and his staff. He has not acted with respect to other party members and in particular to our client and has been rude and offensive in his behaviour towards her. We would respectfully suggest that had this been known to the public, it would most certainly lower the public's regard for and confidence in Members and the Assembly itself. He has not promoted an effective working environment within the Assembly as set out in the said Code of Conduct and he has not acted at all times professionally, courteously and based on mutual respect.



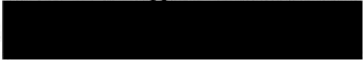


We believe that this statement more than adequately indicates that there have been serious and far reaching breaches of the Code of Conduct with Mr. McCrea not conducting himself in a manner which would maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Assembly. It is clear that he has undertaken many actions which would bring the Assembly into disrepute in terms of its membership and we would respectfully suggest that proper sanctions be brought to bear against Mr. McCrea in this regard.

Yours faithfully  
Holmes & Moffitt



*For Holmes & Moffitt Solicitors*

e-mail: 



HM5

**Danske Bank**

For 24 hour banking call 08457 365 024

Date 22.7.13

Pay

*Ashley Murray*

CLEANSING BELFRS 950009

*One hundred and eighty*

*three pounds*

£ 183.00

MR B MCCREA NO 2 ACCOUNT

Danske Bank is a trading name of Northern Bank Limited

21DEC12 23KFZ

Cheque No.

Sort Code

Account No.

00000018300



Ashleigh Murray

Page 1

Balance: [REDACTED]  
Credit limit: [REDACTED]  
Approved excess: [REDACTED]  
Avail. balance: [REDACTED]

Account number: [REDACTED]  
Product: Danske Basic  
Currency code: GBP  
Latest statement no.: 048  
Statement date: 30.09.2014

Booking date	Value date	Entry text	Amount	Acc. balance
[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	
22.07.2013	22.07.2013	cheque DBchq	183.00	
[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	
01.08.2013	01.08.2013	-DB Cheques	183.00	
[REDACTED]			[REDACTED]	
09.08.2013	09.08.2013	chq DBchq	183.00	
28.08.2013	28.08.2013	0319224 MURRAY	1,223.55	
26.09.2013	26.09.2013	0319224 MURRAY	782.26	





**Danske Bank**View agreement

?

Debit account: [REDACTED] Danske Basic  
Account owner: ASHLEIGH MURRAY [REDACTED] KINDI NOBA  
Agreement number: 000001  
Payment type:  
Type: Regular transfer  
Credit account: [REDACTED] - Danske Choice  
Account owner: BASIL MCCREA [REDACTED] KINDI NOBA  
Agreement status: Deleted  
Last change: 31.01.2014 by BA7876

[Expand all sections](#) [Collapse all sections](#)

## ▼ Payment conditions

Amount: 30.00 GBP

## ▼ Frequency

Payment frequency: Monthly

Usual payment day: 1st

Last payment date:

► Payment exceptions

► Payment messages

[Back](#)



**Danske Bank**

For 24 hour banking call 08457 365 024

Date 22.7.13

Pay

*Ashleigh Murray*

*One hundred and eighty three pounds*

£ 183.00

MR B MCCREA NO 2 ACCOUNT

Danske Bank is a trading name of Northern Bank Limited

21DEC12 25KFZ

Cheque No.

Sort Code

Account No.

000000 18300



AM7

## Extracts Sunday Life 25 May 2014

This document was redacted by the Committee.

AM8

## Copy Letter Murphy's Solicitors 15 May 2014

This document was redacted by the Committee.

lysine from VI. Aspergillus AMG

[illegible]



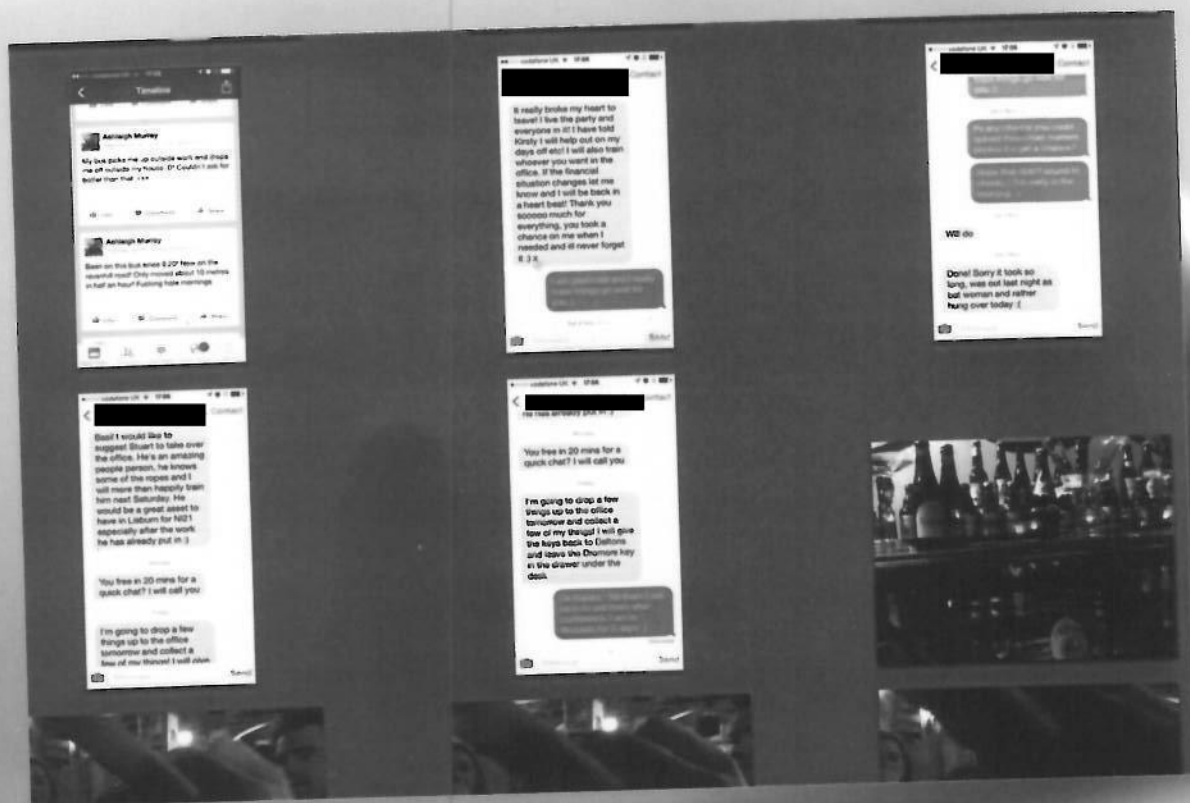


Screenshot of Basil's computer screen

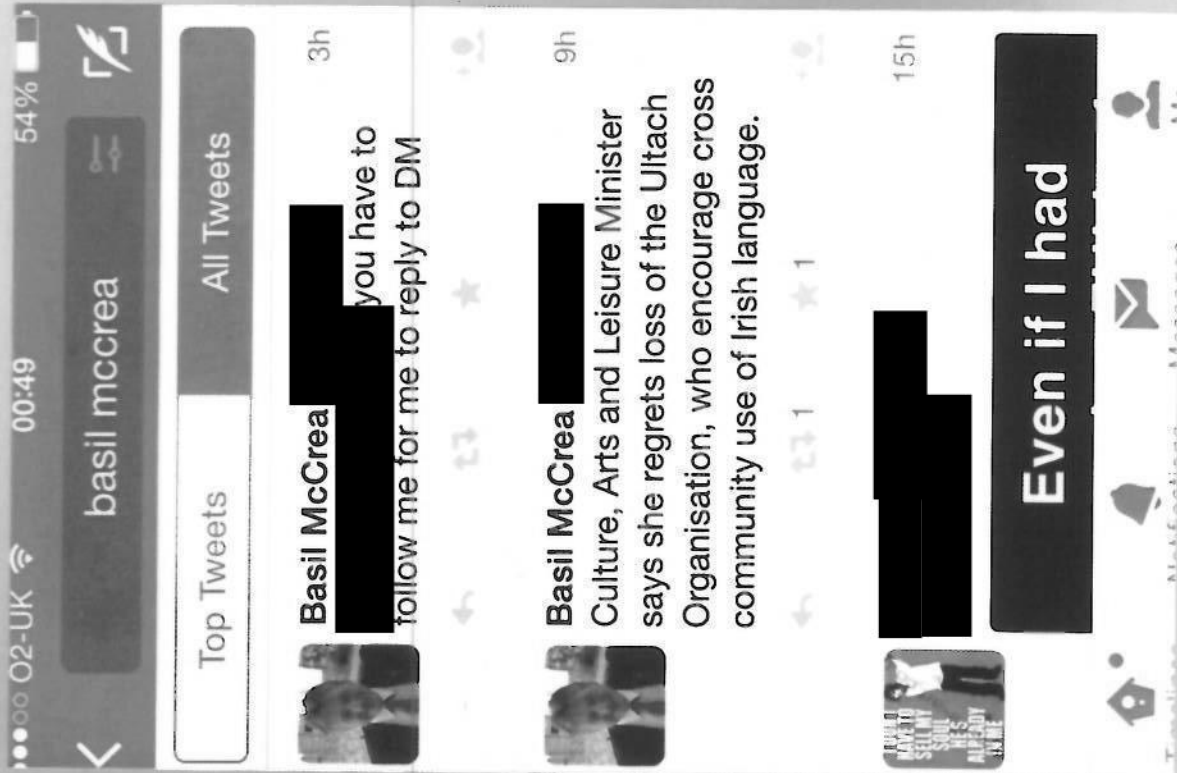
This was found after I left U21

AM10

Basil has taken screenshots of things relating to me







Basil talking to a girl  
there is mentioned in my  
statement asking about  
private messaging each other -

AM11



AM 12

First Start  
ATTENDANCE RECORD

Name of Lead Contractor: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Name: Basil McCreesh

Employee Name: Ashleigh Murray

Attendance for Week Commencing Monday: 12<sup>th</sup>

Day	Attn Code	Start Time	Meal Break	Finish Time	Hours Attended	Comments
Monday	P	10:30am	30min	5pm	6	
Tuesday	P	10:30am	30min	5pm	6	
Wednesday	P	10:30am	30min	5pm	6	
Thursday	P	10:30am	30min	5pm	6	
Friday	P	10:30am	30min	5pm	6	
Saturday						
Sunday						
Total Hours Attended					<u>30</u>	

Attendance codes (Codes must be used – 'ticks' are not acceptable):

Attended  
Certified Sick leave  
Unauthorised Absence  
Authorised Absence  
Holiday (Annual Leave)  
Public Holiday

Lead Contractor Stamp

I declare that the attendance above is correct

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
16/8/13

Date: 16/8/13

Full Name & Position in Organisation: Party Leader  
must be signed by a member of staff within the organization where t

Timesheet signed by basil showing he accepted & started work at 10:30 each morning.



Ashleigh Murray

6 months probationary period (1 weeks' notice either side)

1. Hours of work:

Monday- Stormont- 10-5pm (lunch 1 hour)

Tuesday- Stormont 10-5pm (lunch 1 hour)

Wednesday- Lisburn 10-5pm

Thursday Lisburn 10-5pm

Friday Lisburn 10-5pm

3 occasions of lateness in 6 months will affect probationary period.

Periods of sickness should include a letter from GP

Appointments for doctors must have 1 weeks' notice to office manager

Job Description

██████████ placement officer ██████████ (any queries or support go to ██████████ re scheme)

Administrative duties

Membership engagement via phone, mail and visits

Organising events where necessary

Support senior management team

Act as backup support for other administrative staff when on holidays

Alan Patterson to sign off weekly timesheets and to organise a backup where needed

(Email as sent to me, note the professionalism)





AP 1

Bain, Douglas

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 July 2014 14:29  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Complaint against Basil McCrea  
**Attachments:** Complaint to Assembly Commissioner For Standards.doc; Texts with Basil McCrea on 240713 re Ashleigh Murray.doc

FAO: Douglas Bain  
Assembly Commissioner for Standards

I attach a detailed complaint under the provisions of the Members Code of Conduct regarding the behaviour of Mr. Basil McCrea. The complaint specifies the Code sections and principles that I believe have been breached.

Relevant sections of the complaint referring to John McCallister and Ashleigh Murray have been confirmed as an accurate account by these 2 individuals. The complaint is based on my personal experience of Mr. McCrea's behaviour while I worked in a voluntary capacity as NI21 Party Secretary from June-September 2013. In this role I was well placed to see the impact of Mr. McCrea's behaviour on staff. Corroboration on many of the issues raised may be found in complaints raised with you by others. I believe that the level of abuse detailed, the number of individuals involved and the concerns that may be raised with you by others provide sufficient evidence to warrant a full investigation under the Code.

My complaint also refers to unacceptable and defamatory behaviour by an Assembly insider(s) who provided false and malicious information to Mr. McCrea on a number of occasions. Should this individual be uncovered during any investigation I would hope that appropriate action would be taken in the context of the Code, if it is a Member, and by the Assembly Commission if it proves to be a member of Assembly staff.

Please confirm receipt of this email and 2 attachments. I would be happy to discuss any issues in respect of the complaint or any failure on my part to comply with the complaint procedure.

Alan Patterson  
17 July 2014



## BACKGROUND

1. From June-September 2013, I worked for NI21 in a voluntary capacity as Party Secretary; appointed to the role by Mr McCrea in June 2013. I did not however become a member of the Party as I became increasingly concerned about Mr. McCrea's treatment of staff, his obvious disdain for his constituents and a focus on the optics of social media that lacked substance.
2. Part of my role included limited management responsibility for Ashleigh Murray, Mr. McCrea's PA. At the outset Mr. McCrea described Ashleigh as talented and alluded to her difficult background. He gave no indication that he had any misgivings about her ability, performance or commitment. My complaint covers Mr McCrea's unacceptable treatment of staff in general and particularly his unjustified and unacceptable treatment of Ashleigh, Karen Tabane (Stormont based secretary) and a Canadian intern Jacqueline Neglia. I also raise serious concerns about Mr. McCrea's treatment of me and of the apparent disregard he had for constituents and the services he was elected and paid to provide.
3. It was never clear what role Mr. McCrea wanted me to play. His demands varied on a daily basis between Party, constituency and Assembly business. He found it difficult to maintain clear boundaries. As Party Secretary I was in regular contact with all staff and worked with them to define roles, purpose and to set agreed objectives. Many staff indicated that they found Mr. McCrea stressful and intimidating. Those based in Mr McCallister's office refused to have meaningful contact with his office, largely because of Mr. McCrea's behaviour. It was clear that the Stormont office was dysfunctional and that a number of staff were wary of Mr. McCrea.
4. I approached Carecall on 26 May 2014, to make this complaint, as this was the process agreed by Mr. McCallister and Mr. McCrea. The failure to conclude that investigation prompted me to take my complaint to the Assembly Commissioner for Standards. It would appear from a leaked copy of a Carecall letter dated 16 June to Mr. McCallister and the NI21 Chairperson appointed recently by Mr. McCrea, [REDACTED] that the investigation was suspended because Mr. McCrea failed to respond to the allegations made in an investigation he had agreed to, and also because the new NI21 Executive, also apparently appointed by Mr. McCrea, refused permission for the investigation to continue. This approach frustrated the basic right of any member of staff to have access to due process i.e. to make and have investigated complaints. It has also demonstrated a failure in duty of care.
5. The views expressed here are my own and are honestly held and freely given. They are based on my own experience of Mr. McCrea. John McCallister and Ashleigh Murray have confirmed as accurate those extracts where they are mentioned.

## CODE OF CONDUCT BREACHES AND REFERENCES

6. My complaint covers a range of unacceptable conduct and inappropriate behaviour including bullying and harassment by Mr. McCrea. The issues relate to a number of Code sections, namely that his behaviour failed to meet the Code principles of conduct on: Public Duty, Integrity, Openness, Honesty, Leadership, Equality, Good Relations and Respect. The Code requires members to "at all times conduct themselves in a

manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Assembly and never undertake any action which would bring the Assembly into disrepute". I believe that Mr. McCrea has failed to meet this standard. I do not believe that the conduct illustrated below could be said to represent the high level of ethical behaviour expected by the community of our public representatives.

7. Many individuals have been damaged by Mr. McCrea's behaviour. Mr. McCrea and the NI Assembly have a duty of care to staff. Where these staff are volunteers and particularly when they are young people that duty of care needs to be carefully guarded through the provision of adequate protections and complaint mechanisms. The experience of many staff in NI21 seriously damaged their "trust and confidence in the integrity of the Assembly" and in Mr. McCrea. Many may reasonably feel that they have been exploited by Mr. McCrea.

## **TREATMENT OF STAFF**

8. Staff appeared stressed and anxious before, during and after meetings with Mr. McCrea. I observed that his behaviour was overbearing, often aggressive, bullying and at times unfairly derisive of staff performance. He refused efforts to define staff roles and his inconsistent demands on staff caused confusion. Attempts to address concerns with him were met by unjustified criticism and many staff felt intimidated by his reactions. Mr. McCrea's approach included briefing against individuals and making unjustified allegations of untrustworthiness, ineffectiveness, and various forms of mental incapacity. I had personal experience of this approach and witnessed it in his conversations with me about Ashleigh Murray, John McCallister, Karen Tabane and Jacqueline Neglia. I understand from Ashleigh, John and Connor Clements (Communications Director) that they witnessed this destructive and abusive tactic. His behaviour and verbal abuse sought to degrade and humiliate people of genuine intent.
9. Karen Tabane operated as Mr. McCrea's Stormont secretary. She demonstrated clear signs of stress and anxiety during my time in the Party. She expressed concern about Mr. McCrea's behaviour and was, she explained, off on work related stress due to this behaviour for a period before my time. Mr. McCrea declined my entirely reasonable requests that he assist Karen in her role as diary secretary by spending 10-15 minutes each week with her to confirm diary commitments. He was not prepared to create the circumstances under which Karen could do her job effectively. Mr. McCrea appeared oblivious to the needs of staff. He failed to establish a positive and enabling work environment, but was content to make critical and derogatory comments about Karen's performance to me and others. I understand from Ashleigh that Mr. McCrea asked her whether he should sack Karen, a full-time employee. Mr. McCrea's conduct with Karen was in my view, unfair, undermining, bullying, and failed to demonstrate required standards of respect, integrity and duty of care to a member of staff who had been off sick with a work related stress illness.
10. Mr. McCrea made a number of comments to me expressing uncertainty about whether to retain Jacqueline Neglia a young Canadian intern. Mr. McCrea appeared to object to Jacqueline's preparedness to query his actions and direction. Jacqueline also appeared to have personal concerns about Mr. McCrea's conduct and had words with him on one occasion. I am aware that there may be a series of inappropriate and seriously intrusive photographs taken by Mr. McCrea of Jacqueline, which if true might be considered voyeuristic and evidence of a sexual predator at work.



11. Mr. McCrea was regularly critical of the Deputy NI21 leader Mr. McCallister in his absence during staff meetings, and appeared to question Mr. McCallister's commitment. I have been advised by Mr. McCallister that Mr. McCrea routinely undermined people with others through abusive slurs on their character, effectiveness and mental health.
12. Mr. McCrea brought young, impressionable people into the Stormont office each week, often without introduction and disregarding the very limited facilities and space available. No guidance was given on what to do with the visitors. Karen Tabane and I were left to discover their background, expectations and to find something for them to do. This was both a distraction from other work and embarrassing for everyone.
13. I was concerned that Mr McCrea was so focussed on social media and photo opportunities that he lacked substance and interest in developing policies and in doing the groundwork essential to develop the concept of "fresh politics" beyond a mantra. At one staff meeting he asked staff the purpose of conducting surveys. Legitimate responses such as seeking public views, canvassing constituents on key policy issues were batted away and Mr. McCrea pronounced that the sole purpose was to collect email addresses. I considered this lacking ethical and professional standards and that such an approach could corrupt young peoples perception of what politics should be about.
14. At the Party launch Mr. McCrea defined the Party as a "movement". Unfortunately Mr. McCrea tended to operate as a dictator and sole arbiter on all things. His chaotic approach to management and staff created stress, promoted inefficiency and left staff feeling undervalued and abused. His conduct to staff in general, in my view, breached the requirements and standards of behaviour reasonably required under Code sections covering; integrity, openness, honesty, leadership and respect. He failed to demonstrate any duty of care towards staff.

## **TREATMENT OF ASHLEIGH MURRAY**

15. I was not aware of Ashleigh's tragic background until I read it recently in a News Letter article. Mr. McCrea however was fully aware of the details and therefore the general duty of care was particularly important to observe in Ashleigh's case to ensure that she was protected from further harm. It did appear that Ashleigh's star fell when a new girl came on the scene. I observed that Kirsty McClay suddenly took over Ashleigh's duties e.g. personal assistant attending events with Mr. McCrea.
16. I was aware that a whispering campaign started against Ashleigh around July 2013. Allegations were made about her time keeping and work ethic. A sinister claim was being made by a number of female staff close to Mr. McCrea at that time that Ashleigh was "dangerous". I had occasion to have words with Kirsty McClay and Jacqueline Neglia about staff loyalty after they openly made this allegation during staff meetings and on one occasion within earshot of Ashleigh causing her distress. I impressed upon Kirsty, and Jacqueline the importance of staff loyalty and the standards of behaviour I had set for all staff. The impression I gained was that Mr. McCrea was spreading criticism of Ashleigh with selected staff in order to undermine and discredit her.
17. I was aware that Ashleigh did have some reliability issues though these appeared minor and tended to reflect the difficult circumstances in her background, limited work experience and her dependence on several buses to get to work. My personal experience of her work was that she showed initiative, got things done and was

prepared to take advice. I saw nothing to suggest that she was "dangerous" or was not performing at a satisfactory level. The decision by [REDACTED] to appoint Ashleigh as a paid member of staff after an interview on 8 July 2013 (to start on 15 July), suggests that any concerns were minimal. Despite this Ashleigh was effectively put out to grass by Mr. McCrea who assigned her to establish and staff a constituency office in Lisburn that he clearly had no intention of using for that purpose and rarely visited. I was not aware of how this office was funded but I have no recollection of Mr. McCrea conducting any constituency business from it, indeed Mr. McCrea openly expressed disdain for his constituents and appeared to have no interest in serving them. I attach a transcript of a series of texts I had with Mr. McCrea on 24 July 2013, about the Lisburn office, Ashleigh, her role and how she would be managed. The texts indicate that Mr. McCrea pressed me not to apply standard performance management to Ashleigh, an approach that I repeatedly rejected. The impression I gained was that Mr. McCrea had personal issues with Ashleigh and hoped that I would treat her unfairly rather than deal directly with her himself. Such unfair conduct so soon after her appointment suggests that there were serious underlying issues motivating Mr. McCrea.

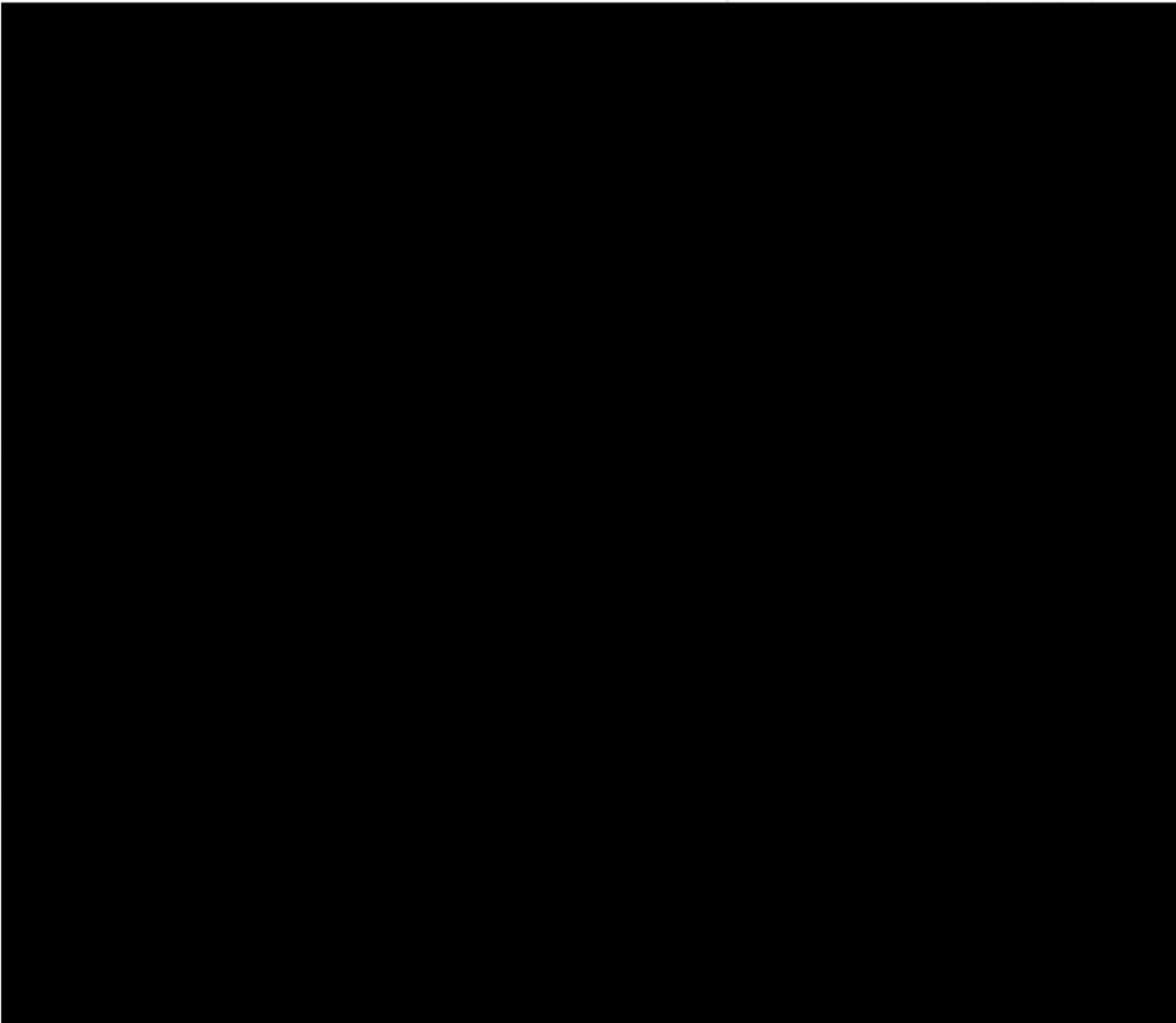
18. Mr McCrea made no effort to allocate any substantive role to Ashleigh in the Lisburn office. He mentioned that she should conduct surveys outside the office but did not contribute to my efforts with Ashleigh to develop a set of survey questions. He failed to clarify her role but was regularly prepared to make spurious criticism of her performance and attitude. I questioned this approach directly with Mr. McCrea and also with the Party Chair [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] advised me and others that she had questioned Mr. McCrea about his relationship with Ashleigh and had been told that he had "been indiscrete" with her. [REDACTED] claimed that this had involved Mr. McCrea telling Ashleigh very personal details including about his relationship with his partner, but did not involve any physical indiscretion. I note the reference to allegations of sexual inappropriateness made by Ashleigh and reported in the media directly contradict this line.
19. Recently I have been advised of Mr. McCrea's alleged inappropriate predatory behaviour with another ex-member of NI21, who wishes to remain anonymous. I was advised by this individual that Mr. McCrea made uninvited and unwelcome advances at an NI21 event. It was alleged that he phoned her 3 times recently, many months after leaving the party and during the Carecall investigation. It is of concern that Mr. McCrea may have been attempting to inappropriately influence a potential witness and alleged victim of his inappropriate behaviour.
20. I was advised recently by Suzanne Chalkley who had been responsible for membership issues before she left the party in January 2014, that Mr. McCrea had asked her to undertake a "damage limitation exercise" with Ashleigh.
21. I believe that Mr. McCrea's behaviour with Ashleigh, notwithstanding any sexual inappropriateness that I was not aware of, was abusive, undermining and amounted to bullying and harassment. The attached transcript of text messages sees him urge me to keep his complaints private. His conduct with me and others lends support to concerns that he was routinely undermining staff. In my view Mr. McCrea has failed to meet the standard of personal and professional behaviour required under the Code sections on; openness, honesty, leadership, good relations, respect and equality. Mr. McCrea failed in his duty of care to a vulnerable member of staff. If the allegations made to Carecall by many other females referred to in media reports prove substantive,

there must be serious concerns whether Mr. McCrea has the ethical and moral standards required to work unsupervised with young females.

## **TREATMENT OF ALAN PATTERSON**

22. My personal complaint about Mr. McCrea's conduct covers the following issues:
- Inappropriate pressure on a witness/victim to conceal evidence in an attempt to frustrate and pervert a potential complaint;
  - Repeated, malicious false allegations and threatening behaviour against me in respect of my past in the Assembly, my approach to work, relationships with Assembly staff and mental health;
  - False representations on my relationship with NI21 staff; and
  - Constant undermining behaviour of my position in the Party;
23. Ashleigh has advised me that Mr. McCrea acted to pervert and frustrate a potential complaint about his conduct with her by instructing and pressurising her to make false statements about their relationship.
24. My decision to step down as Party Secretary in September 2013, followed ongoing abusive, defamatory and undermining conduct by Mr. McCrea in conjunction with an anonymous Assembly individual(s) who may be another MLA or a member of the Assembly secretariat. Mr McCrea refused to identify the individual who was giving him false information about my performance and conduct while I was a Principal Clerk. The impact of their conversation was to prompt Mr. McCrea to aggressively challenge me on whether I was going to take a tribunal case against him. Without waiting for or inviting a response there followed a series of malicious, false and extremely offensive claims e.g. that I had Aspergers, I would be on the way out if I challenged his position, I was bureaucratic, I had problems with people etc. Mr. McCrea's behaviour was threatening, intimidating, aggressive and completely unwarranted. It amounted to an extreme form of bullying and harassment. His tirade was prompted by my preparedness to challenge his conduct. Its content was defamatory and false.
25. His behaviour was facilitated by the malicious intent of an Assembly insider(s) determined to provide false and defamatory information to prevent my return in any role. I would hope that any investigation into this complaint would identify this individual. If it is another MLA, I trust that they would not be protected by prior anonymity from inclusion in this complaint. If it is a member of the Assembly secretariat staff I trust that, unlike in previous cases, significant disciplinary action is taken.
26. I have been advised by John McCallister that Mr. McCrea has a history of making false claims about the mental health of a range of people associated with NI21 including John; all it seems made simply because they challenged him. Such allegations, whether founded or unfounded are intended to bully, harass, humiliate and undermine the individual. This indicates a common thread of abusive conduct intended to place a slur on individuals that is utterly contemptible.



- 
28. The behaviour of Mr. McCrea and his anonymous Assembly contact(s) were abusive and defamatory. The aim was to destroy my standing in the Party, to damage my sense of self worth, reputation and my relationship with colleagues. When I raised concerns about his conduct with staff and myself, Mr. McCrea responded by accusing me of appointing myself as Party Secretary and made unfounded, unspecified and completely false allegations that "everyone had complained about me". Having checked this allegation with staff I am satisfied that it is without substance.
29. Mr. McCrea provided false representations in a News Letter article dated 22 May 2014, by submitting for publication selected extracts from 2 emails from me to him purported to indicate that NI21 staff had problems with me and that this was the reason I left. The email was in fact addressing my concern about his unacceptable conduct and the behaviour of his anonymous Assembly contact(s) and had no relationship, as Mr. McCrea well knew, to any staff issues in NI21. False representations appears to be Mr. McCrea's modus operandi!

## CONCLUSION

30. My complaint mainly relates to Mr. McCrea's conduct with staff. I have identified the relevant Code principles breached and have sought to be as open as sensitivity to others involved permits. If the individuals mentioned also forward a complaint to the Commissioner for Standards I trust that my information may add some weight to their claims.
31. For my own part I hope that significant action is taken to prevent any repetition of such unacceptable and abusive behaviour. I believe that Mr. McCrea failed with many staff to demonstrate a duty of care, that his conduct amounted to sustained bullying and harassment and breached the aforementioned principles of conduct in the Code. I believe also that the Assembly failed to protect staff from this abuse and should have had provisions in place, as there are in other devolved institutions, to provide a mechanism for Members staff to complain about abuse. The involvement of an Assembly insider(s), whether another MLA or Assembly member of staff, significantly contributed to the abuse in my own case. Aided by Mr. Crea they collectively recreated the "hostile working environment" that an external investigator, [REDACTED], had also found in his investigations and had noted in his report of April 2008, which of course was also concealed from the Commission.

Alan Patterson  
8 July 2014



**Texts on 24 July 2013 between Basil McCrea and Alan Patterson re Ashleigh Murray**

**B McC:** Did you go to the Lisburn Office? Sent you email

**AP:** Yea. Phone in and Ashleigh arranging furniture from store. [REDACTED] checking broadband. Should be ready to run soon. Ashleigh now has a set of objectives. Alan

**B McC:** What furniture from store? Do (sic) be honest I don't want her or anybody else spending a lot of time in that office. It is on the second floor!

**AP:** Your note has her in Lisburn Monday-Wednesday but much of that will be outside. Apparently you have some office furniture in store. All it needs is a small table and a few chairs. Will you be holding constituency surgery in that office?

**B McC:** I am getting nervous about this. I am not sure that management by Objectives work for Ashleigh

**AP:** She needs clear objectives and targets to achieve. I will be monitoring her performance regularly. Without this clarity it is hard to assess performance or address poor performance.

**B McC:** The note is the plan but that was before her attendance and time keeping in the first week disappointed.

**AP:** I think we need to stick with the plan for the moment. She now has plenty to do and for me to assess her performance by.

**B McC:** She has very little experience and I will not have her sitting on the second floor texting her mates thinking that is work! She has a lot to prove to the team.

**B McC:** Ps these texts are private

**AP:** I agree and colleagues have mentioned issues. However [REDACTED] has taken her on after an interview and I need to manage her. [REDACTED] Jacqueline and Jamie will be in that office some of the time and will let me know if work is not getting done. I also intend to call in unannounced.



## The Speaker



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

AP 4

Office of the Speaker  
Room 39 Parliament Buildings  
Balmiscaw, Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX

Mr Basil McCrea MLA

11 June 2013

Dear Basil,

Thank you for your letter dated 10 June 2013 in relation to the formation of a new political party called NI21 which will be represented in the Assembly Chamber by yourself as its Party Leader and by John McCallister MLA as Deputy Leader. In accordance with Standing Order 3(10), this change will take effect from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

In relation to your query on the speaking rights available to members of NI21, I have made clear to the House on previous occasions that this is a matter for the Business Committee. I use the discretion provided to me under Standing Orders within the framework agreed by the Business Committee.

As you are aware, I informed the House last week that I would not be in Parliament Buildings during the weeks beginning 10<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013. However, I have been informed that the Business Committee considered this issue at its meeting today and agreed that I write to inform you of its position.

The Business Committee resolved, by majority decision, that:

- (i) the Committee on Procedures should be asked to consider issues relating to the emergence of new political parties or groupings during a mandate, including speaking arrangements;
- (ii) in the interim, parties with five or more members would be called, in order of size, in the first speaking round; and
- (iii) parties with two or more members, not called in the first speaking round, would be called at the end of the third speaking round.

The interim arrangements at (ii) and (iii) will come into effect from Monday 17 June 2013. I can, therefore, confirm that NI21 will appear on the speaking list in twelfth place on that date. In normal circumstances, your party would not then have the opportunity to speak again until the 36<sup>th</sup> slot. The Business Committee has agreed that it will review this situation following the deliberations of the Committee on Procedures.

I am aware of some of the points you have made on the issue of speaking rights for smaller parties recently. From my perspective, I want to clarify that the speaking list agreed by the Business Committee is only used for calling Members to speak in debates and for questions following Ministerial statements. While not all Members may be called to speak on debates on Private Members Motions in the time available, you will be aware there are no similar



constraints on debates on legislation. All who wish to do so may speak. It is also very rare for Members on the list not to be reached within the hour provided for questions to Ministerial statements.

You will recognise that representatives of single Member parties are often called during debates on Bills, Ministerial statements, Question Time, Matters of the Day and Urgent Oral Questions. I would note that no Member of any party can expect to be called for every item of business on which they wish to speak but the Chair does attempt to accommodate as many Members as possible taking account of time constraints and the composition of the House.

I hope this clarifies the current position.

Yours sincerely,



**WILLIAM HAY MLA**

**(Approved by the Speaker and signed in his absence)**





AP 5

Bain, Douglas

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:33  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: No 2 Staff and their roles email from Ashleigh dated 17 June 2013

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Ashleigh Murray [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 17 June 2013, 18:33  
**Subject:** Staff and their roles

Hi Alan,

Here's a wee run through of the people in the office and the roles they play:

Karen:

Karen is Basils main PA. She would organise basil's diary and plan what events Basil attends. Karen looks after all of the general office stuff. She doesn't work Fridays.

Fiona:

Fiona is the researcher of the team. She knows a lot about everything ☺! I haven't come across something she doesn't know. She also has qualifications in Policies etc. She works everyday

[REDACTED] is the media geek ☺! She puts together all the photos, videos, news, and voice clips for the websites and facebook etc. She has another job so it varies when she is in the office.

Kirsty:

Kirsty is handling the membership from the NI21 website, she also helps to look after the facebook and twitter pages. Kirsty studied law at Queens.

Ashleigh (Me ☺)

I travel round with basil to meetings, taking notes, making appointments and following up on whatever he needs. I write press releases etc for the local newspapers. I also manage the websites and facebook and twitter. I handle a lot of things, my role varies depending on what basil needs. During the day im usually with basil. Im available 7 days a week.

Hope this helped a bit. If you had more specific roles in mind let me know and ill point you in the right direction ☺

As for the 28<sup>th</sup>, Theres a few things in the diary to be confirmed so ill check tomorrow and let you know.



Thanks  
Ashleigh



AP 6

**Bain, Douglas**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:37  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: No 3 Staff and their roles email to Ashleigh Murray dated 17 June 2013

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** Ashleigh Murray <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, 17 June 2013, 22:35  
**Subject:** Re: Staff and their roles

Thanks Ashleigh for getting back quickly with this! Basil wants me to take an over-riding role e.g. developing and relating to members and potential members and looking at processes. My past role in the Assembly as a Principal Clerk will be useful in making sense of Assembly procedures.

My role will no doubt become clearer as Basil thinks more about what he wants me to do and as I get into the role.

I very much look forward to working with you all and hope that you will find me very ready to listen and work with you all as a team.

I am free all day on the 28th so fit me in when it suits. I will be aiming to be in the Assembly on a regular basis thereafter and will need a staff pass.

I am on holiday from the 19th-26th in hopefully sunny Crete!

Regards

Alan

**From:** Ashleigh Murray [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]



AP 7

**Bain, Douglas**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:38  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: No 4 Role definition email to Mr. McCrea dated 18 June 2013

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 June 2013, 9:30  
**Subject:** Role definition

Basil

Glad to see you got the PofO raised and useful to have SF rein in behind you on inclusivity.

You outlined some of the areas you wanted me to take responsibility for. These were:

- Developing the processes around party membership, reviewing contacts and liaising with new and potential members to develop area groups;
- Reviewing current social media uses and applications and developing a clearer definition around the various e-contact applications;
- Developing office procedures and processes;
- Providing advice on Assembly matters;
- Working with Peter on policy development; and
- Producing regular reports to members.

Let me know if I have missed or misrepresented anything.

I spoke with Ashleigh yesterday who sent me some info on staff and roles. i look forward to working with your team and have arranged to call into the office on the 28th on return from holiday. Ashleigh will confirm a suitable time. I aim to work from Stormont several days a week and will need a staff pass.

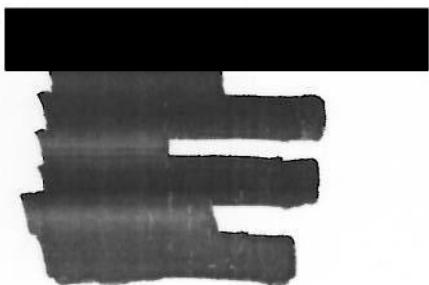
See you on the 28th.





Regards

Alan





# **Review of D'Hondt Community Designation and Provisions for Opposition**

**Report : NIA 123/11-15 (Assembly and Executive Review Committee)**

**[In the interests of economy this document which runs to more than 50 pages has not been copied. It can be viewed on the Assembly website or purchased from TSO]**



Many Thanks

Job Mentor

People 1st  
42 - 44 Railway Street  
Lisburn  
Co. Antrim BT28 1XP

E-mail: [REDACTED]  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Fax: [REDACTED]

[www.people-1st.co.uk](http://www.people-1st.co.uk)  
[www.people1st-online.com](http://www.people1st-online.com)



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---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 24 June 2013 12:01  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: First Start Programme

Good Morning [REDACTED],

Further to our conversation this morning I can confirm that I will advertise two first start vacancies for you. These will be advertised for 48 hrs as requested, once I receive the job vacancy number I will email you to let you know so you can let the clients you feel are suitable for the job know, so they can go and apply for the job at their local JBO.

I have enclosed two documents in which I will need completed by you before any client starts in the Steps to work programme.



If you require any further information please do not hesitate to get in contact.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 June 2013 15:40  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** First Start Programme

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

I have been passed your details from [REDACTED] who you meet with this morning. [REDACTED] has advised that you would like to find out about how you can get help to employ a young person.

I look after the Steps to Work Programme, which is a DEL employability based programme which helps people who are currently on benefits gain the necessary work experience and skills needed to move closer to being job ready.

There are a number of strands to the Steps to work programme that might be suitable for you, I have given a short description on these strands below but you can find out more information by reading the attachments.

**Steps to work** - this is a work placement employability scheme that can last either 8 or 26 weeks. The participant remains on benefits and needs to complete 30 hrs a week work placement with an employer. The aim of this strand is to help increase the participants work experience and help them develop their employability skills (i.e. Timekeeping, team work. Reliability). This is open to anyone who is on benefits and is 18 or older.

**First start** – this is a 6 month paid employment strand for 18 – 24 yr olds. The successful participant becomes an employee of the company for at least 6 months. We pay the company either £120 or £155 a week to help towards their wages, this subsidy lasts for maximum 6 months.

Please do not hesitate to get in contact with me on [REDACTED] if you have any questions or would like to find out more information.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards







## **First Start**

### **Employer Information**

#### ***Background:***

The current economic climate, and increase in the unemployment register, has made the move from benefit into sustainable employment particularly difficult. This increase has been even more pronounced among young unemployed people, with almost 30% of the JSA register comprising 18-24 year olds.

To provide some short-term support and job opportunities for these young people, The Department of Employment and Learning have introduced a new strand of Step to Work. This initiative will provide real workplace opportunities for young unemployed people and will be known as **First Start**.

#### **Benefits to employers:**

- Recruitment of staff organised through People 1<sup>st</sup>
- Weekly Wage contribution to the employer for 26 weeks (Between £120 and £155 depending on age)
- Professional 1 – 1 support for staff recruited through First start

#### **Process**

1. Employer agrees to recruit 18 – 24 year olds through First start and confirms that they can offer employment for at least 26 weeks. (must work at least 30 hours a week)
2. Employer advises People 1<sup>st</sup> if these vacancies are permanent or temporary
3. People 1<sup>st</sup> advertise these posts on 'jobcentre on-line'
4. People 1<sup>st</sup> short list clients for the employer to interview



5. Interviews are held
6. Employer offers employment and notifies People 1<sup>st</sup> of start dates
7. Employer gets successful clients to complete the necessary company contracts and payroll details.
8. Employer gives People 1<sup>st</sup> Bank details, so wage contributions can be made directly to them on a weekly basis (on receipt of a completed attendance record)
9. Successful clients commence employment
10. Employer completes and forwards attendance records to People 1<sup>st</sup> on a weekly basis for 26 weeks.
11. People 1<sup>st</sup> will be on hand to help with any issues or concerns in reference to the new recruits through First Start.
12. People 1<sup>st</sup> will arrange a formal review with the employer and the 'First start' recruit every 4 weeks (for the duration of the 26 week programme)



**FIRST START  
ATTENDANCE RECORD**

Name of Lead Contractor: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance for Week Commencing Monday: \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Attn Code	Start Time	Meal Break	Finish Time	Hours Attended	Comments
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						
Total Hours Attended						

Attendance codes (Codes **must** be used – 'ticks' are not acceptable):

P = Attended  
S = Certified Sick leave  
U = Unauthorised Absence  
AA = Authorised Absence  
H = Holiday (Annual Leave)  
PH = Public Holiday

Lead Contractor Stamp

I confirm that the attendance above is correct

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name in full & Position in Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

This form must be signed by a member of staff within the organization where the person is employed on a daily basis

**A COPY OF THIS FORM MUST BE RETAINED FOR AUDIT PURPOSES**

The information provided on this form may be made available to other Departments/Agencies for the purpose of detecting crime



## Steps to Work Employer Agreement

**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Learner:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Agreement:**

This Agreement shall commence on: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Definitions:**

'Employer' and 'Training Organisation' (TO) means those persons, partnerships or firms who have executed this Agreement, or on whose behalf it has been executed.

'Learner' means any person who is recruited by the TO/ and or employer to participate in the Steps to Work programme under this Agreement.

### **Training:**

The Employer shall use its best endeavours to encourage learners to achieve all standards of training relevant to the programme and to complete the required framework.

The Employer will appoint a mentor to support the learner whilst in training.

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Indemnity and Insurance:**

The Employer shall be liable for, and hereby indemnifies the TO against any liability, loss, claim or proceedings whatsoever arising under any statute or common law in respect of personal injury or damage whatsoever arising out of or in the course of or caused by the performance of this Agreement.

The Employer shall effect and maintain insurance cover to meet statutory obligations to effect such insurance and otherwise to meet insurance liabilities imposed by the Agreement, copies of which will be provided for the TO as confirmation that the Employer is insured to the extent required.

### **Health and Safety:**

The Employer shall take all necessary steps for securing the health, safety and welfare of all learners as required under the relevant legislation in force in Northern Ireland.

### **Monitoring and Inspection:**

For monitoring and inspection purpose of reporting on the Employer's performance of its obligations under this Agreement, the Employer shall permit the TO and the Department and any persons authorised by the Department including Inspectors of the Education and Training Inspectorate, Financial Audit and Support Team (FAST), the Department of Education, the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors to visit and view the operations of the Employer relating to the programme and any premises where such operations are carried out.





**Section A: Employer Details**

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the company      Private \_\_\_\_      Voluntary      \_\_\_\_      Public \_\_\_\_

Number of employees: - \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person responsible for First Aid: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have:-

First Aid box (recommend to have available) YES/NO

Fire Certificate YES/NO

Accident record procedure YES/NO

Health & Safety Policy YES/NO

Registered with H&S executive YES/NO

Equal opportunities policy YES/NO

No. of other learners (STW/ App/ TFS): \_\_\_\_\_

Content of training plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Days of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Do we need to provide PPE? YES/NO



### **Section B: Insurance Details**

<b>Insurance Details</b>	<b>Employer Liability Insurance</b>	<b>Public Liability Insurance</b>
Insurers name		
Policy number		
Expiry Date		
Limit of indemnity £		
Can you attach a copy of this certificate/ schedule?		
If you answered NO, please give details why?		

### **Section C: General Information**

Do you have:-

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • Toilet facilities  | YES/NO |
| • Washing facilities                                       | YES/NO |
| • Canteen/ kitchen   | YES/NO |
| • Up to date fire fighting equipment                       | YES/NO |
| • Are your Fire exits marked                               | YES/NO |
| • Do you have obvious defects that could be an H&S concern | YES/NO |
| • Are statutory regulations displayed?                     | YES/NO |
| • Where is the assembly point?                             | _____  |

Has the following been explained to you?

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| That Reviews will be completed every four weeks?               | YES/NO |
| The maximum hours and days that need completed?                | YES/NO |
| Attendance records need completed weekly?                      | YES/NO |
| The procedure to follow if you have an unsatisfactory learner? | YES/NO |
| The sickness and absence procedure?                            | YES/NO |



**Addendum**

Name of Trainee	Start date	End date

***We, the undersigned, have read this Agreement and accept the terms contained within it. It is understood that the Agreement does not constitute the basis of a contract of employment between any of the participating persons or organisations. A copy of this Agreement will be held by each of the undersigned***

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

For and on behalf of  
(company name): \_\_\_\_\_

DFPF Ltd.  
T/A Dairy Farm Training &  
People 1st

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
BLOCK CAPITALS BLOCK CAPITALS

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## **First Start**

### **Employer Details**

---

1. Employer name:
2. Employer Address:
3. Contact Name:
4. Telephone Number:

### **Employer Bank Details**

---

1. Bank name:
2. Bank address:
3. Sort Code:
4. Account Number:

### **Employee Details**

---

1. Employee Name:
2. Start Date:
3. Finish Date:
4. Employee's age:
5. The Amount People 1<sup>st</sup> will contribute weekly on receipt of completed timesheet will be: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Paid Holiday entitlement for 6 month basis:





### **First Start Process**

- Employee starts with Employer. They must receive a contract and be added to your payroll.
- Employer must complete and send the attendance record to People 1<sup>st</sup> (42 – 44 Railway Street, Lisburn) on a weekly basis. These must be with People 1<sup>st</sup> no later than a Monday at 12pm. (original copies needed for audit purposes)
- On receipt of the attendance record, People 1<sup>st</sup> will then process the employee's weekly contribution to the bank account detailed above
- Payment will be made via a bacs payment into your bank account on a Friday.

#### **NB:**

- First Start job opportunities must be for at least 30 hours employment per week (excluding meal breaks).
- The level of the wage paid to the participant will be determined by the employer but must be at least National Minimum Wage.
- Employers should complete and forward the First Start Attendance Record (StW15 (FS)) to People 1<sup>st</sup> Lisburn. These should be signed and dated by the employer organisation and the employee
- The Employer will receive the following amount for each participant based on a 30 hour week:
  - £120 per week for 18-20 year olds; or
  - £155 for 21-24 year olds;
- The rate at which payment is made will be determined by the age of the participant when they start employment.
- Payments to an employer will cease on the 20th working day of absence due to any combination of sickness or unauthorised absence. This, however, does not automatically result in termination of employment. This will be a matter for the employer



# National Minimum Wage rates

The National Minimum Wage rate per hour depends on your age and whether you're an apprentice - you must be at least school leaving age to get it.

Year	21 and over	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice*
2012 (current rate)	£6.19	£4.98	£3.68	£2.65

Email – [REDACTED]/Patterson 24 July 2013 and attachments

This attachment was redacted by the Committee.











Bain, Douglas

AP 10

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:44  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: More No 6 re ashleigh from [REDACTED] dated 24 July 2013

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** Alan Patterson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 24 July 2013, 11:22  
**Subject:** ashleigh

don't forget we need to give her a contract with 6 months probation and also a copy fo a disciplinary process..in fact everyone who gets paid needs a basic contract with this...can I leave it with you Alan.

[REDACTED]

Email Murray/[REDACTED] 24 July 2013

This document was redacted by the Committee.

AP 12

Bain, Douglas

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:48  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw:No 8 ashleigh management interference from Alan Patterson dated 25 July 2013

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 July 2013, 0:15  
**Subject:** Re: ashleigh

We can speak about this on Friday. All paid staff have a contract/particulars of employment. As Ashleigh is not paid by us this is not required but might be worth completing.

Basil has texted me a number of time raising concerns about Ashleigh. he needs to let me get on with managing her and must not backtrack on his recent note indicating her Lisburn role. the only way to manage someone like Ashleigh is to have a clear understanding on objectives and required performance targets.

Just back from a BBQ at John McCallister's house but did the grand tour of south Down finding it.

Alan

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** Alan Patterson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 24 July 2013, 11:22  
**Subject:** ashleigh

don't forget we need to give her a contract with 6 months probation and also a copy fo a disciplinary process..in fact everyone who gets paid needs a basic contract with this...can I leave it with you Alan.



Bain, Douglas

AP 13

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:55  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: Email No 11 Fwd: New role from Alan Patterson dated 18 August 2013



----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Alan Patterson [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 16 August 2013, 11:32  
**Subject:** Fwd: New role

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Alan Patterson [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 15 August 2013 00:16  
**Subject:** New role  
**To:** Basil McCrea [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Alan Patterson  
<[REDACTED]>

Basil

We discussed a different role for me in the party yesterday and I promised to reflect and get back to you in a few days. You suggested that I might stand as a candidate in the next Council election in my area and agreed that I could work with Peter on some policy issues. Peter is content with this arrangement and I am happy to take on these roles.

We discussed some issues of concern. I had a useful discussion with [REDACTED] this afternoon and again later during a handover with [REDACTED] in respect of Ashleigh. I empathise with Ashleigh who has been the victim of some unfair comments from a few colleagues.

You have mentioned a number of claims made directly to you by an Assembly member of staff in regard to my departure from the Assembly. This appears to have caused you concern. You declined to name the individual whose conduct was entirely unacceptable and breached a settlement in my favour reached in 2009. For the record and to ensure that you and [REDACTED] are clear on the facts related to my departure and are secure in my good faith, I have set these out below.

I had originally advised you that I could offer two days a week in the Assembly but was flexible about the days and would always seek to be available if required. I will be available to help Peter on these days and will need to spend further time developing a local profile and NI21 group.





AP 14

Bain, Douglas

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:49  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Fw: No 9 YES - Employer Visit re Ashleigh dated 5 August 2013

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 5 August 2013, 12:39  
**Subject:** YES - Employer Visit

Hi Alan,

As discussed today, I have arranged for [REDACTED] to meet with you on Friday 9th August at 10.30am to discuss the Youth Employment Scheme.

Should you need to contact her she can be reached on [REDACTED]

Regards

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Team Leader  
Holywood Road Jobs and Benefit Office  
Department for Employment & Learning  
[REDACTED]

.....  
Our aim is to promote learning and skills to prepare people for work and support the economy  
.....

**people:skills:jobs:**

Any views expressed by the sender of this message are not necessarily those of the Department for Employment & Learning. This e-mail and any files transmitted with it are intended solely for the use of the addressee(s). If you have received this e-mail in error, please use the reply button to tell us and then permanently delete what you have received.

Please note: Communications with the Department for Employment & Learning may be monitored in order to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.



AP 15

**Bain, Douglas**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2014 23:57  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** Final email No 12 Fw: Fwd: Role

This is the final email in support of my complaint.

Alan Patterson  
6 August 2014

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Alan Patterson [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 10 September 2013 17:07  
**Subject:** Role  
**To:** Basil McCrea [REDACTED], John McCallister [REDACTED]

Basil

I have reflected on the negative impact that the conversations you had with undisclosed Assembly staff/Member has had on your perception of me. It is clear that those who approached you have sought to prevent my return to the Assembly by discrediting my professionalism and approach to work and people. While I can understand why the malicious and wholly incorrect information provided might have caused you concerns I am not prepared to work under a cloud of mischief making.

I have decided to withdraw from further active participation in NI21 but will be voting for the Party at elections.

Regards

Alan



I'm trying :)! Tbh I'm finding things extremely difficult atm, I've never been this financially unstable, I actually have no money for food etc. I'm trying my best to be available but when I don't have the funds I'm not able to get up and it's making me look bad! Like I could do with not having to come in tomorrow as its more strain this week, [REDACTED]

••••• Vodafone UK 20:41

📶 🔋

< Messages (2) **Ashleigh**

Contact

Ok I get it. Can you get a bus fare for tomorrow?

Yes

Ok we will resolve short term issue tomorrow when I see you. Longer term sorted ASAP

Mon 1 Jul 10:04

Morning! I've spoke to Karen this morning and discussed my financial state and how I'm struggling! I'm finding it quite hard to explain to you how skint I am, [REDACTED] in his account! I don't want this to effect my work or your



opinion on my  
commitment to you or  
ni21! I have also said that  
on Mondays due to me  
signing on I wouldn't be in,  
I would have to leave at 2  
today! I have my personal  
laptop here and the iPad  
so if anythings needed I'm  
available

It is not negotiable whether  
you turn up or not. I will be  
going past your house at  
11:30 be ready. It does  
give the wrong impression.

●●●●○ Vodafone UK 20:41



< Messages (2) **Ashleigh**

Contact

Mon 1 Jul 14:25

That's me away on to sign  
on! Thanks for doing that  
other for me, you really  
didn't have to! It's really  
appreciated and takes alot  
of stress away so thank  
you :)

Ok :)







Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

**Repayment of Money**

3 messages

Ashleigh Murray [REDACTED]

Wed, Sep 18, 2013 at 1:29 PM

To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Karen Tabahe

Hi,

On 28th August 2013 i was overpaid in my wages of £400. I will pay this back at a rate of £50 per month. Start date of 26th September 2013

Many Thanks  
Ashleigh Murray  
NI21

Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Thu, Sep 19, 2013 at 11:29 AM

To: Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Could you deal with this please. She was not overpaid. She was given an advance because she was being paid monthly. This was a gesture of good will by me. It was not some sort of administrative error. She was aware of this. It is disappointing that she is now proposing repayment terms given that she has been paid a lot more money than she had been receiving on benefits.

I do not understand how she arrived at the figure of £400. I believe she received three cheques of around £185. Please ask her how she got to the figure of £400. [REDACTED] who organises these things is currently sick but I can of course get details of the cheques given to her.

I am not against coming to some sort of arrangement given we are trying to put things on a better footing with her. I have received money from People first. So I am not out of pocket at the moment but I have to pay this money to the NIAssembly and they will not give me time to pay.

Also it is important that Ashleigh files in her timesheets. Signed off by you as per the agreement with people first.



12/8/2014

NI21 Mail - Repayment of Money

[REDACTED] will advise.

I would prefer that she is informed immediately that you will be dealing with all issues. I do not want her contacting [REDACTED] or Karen.

Can you both confirm the appropriate response to Ashleigh's email.

[Quoted text hidden]

--  
Basil McCrea MLA  
[REDACTED]

---

Fri, Sep 20, 2013 at 1:46 PM

To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED], Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Hi Basil

Indeed the points you make are very valid. Suzanne as discussed the first stage is to go through the amounts in total paid and then cross reference yourself with [REDACTED] from People First, this will give an absolute amount owed to Basil which can then be repaid promptly.

Many Thanks

[REDACTED]  
[Quoted text hidden]

--  
[REDACTED]  
NI21 Chairwoman

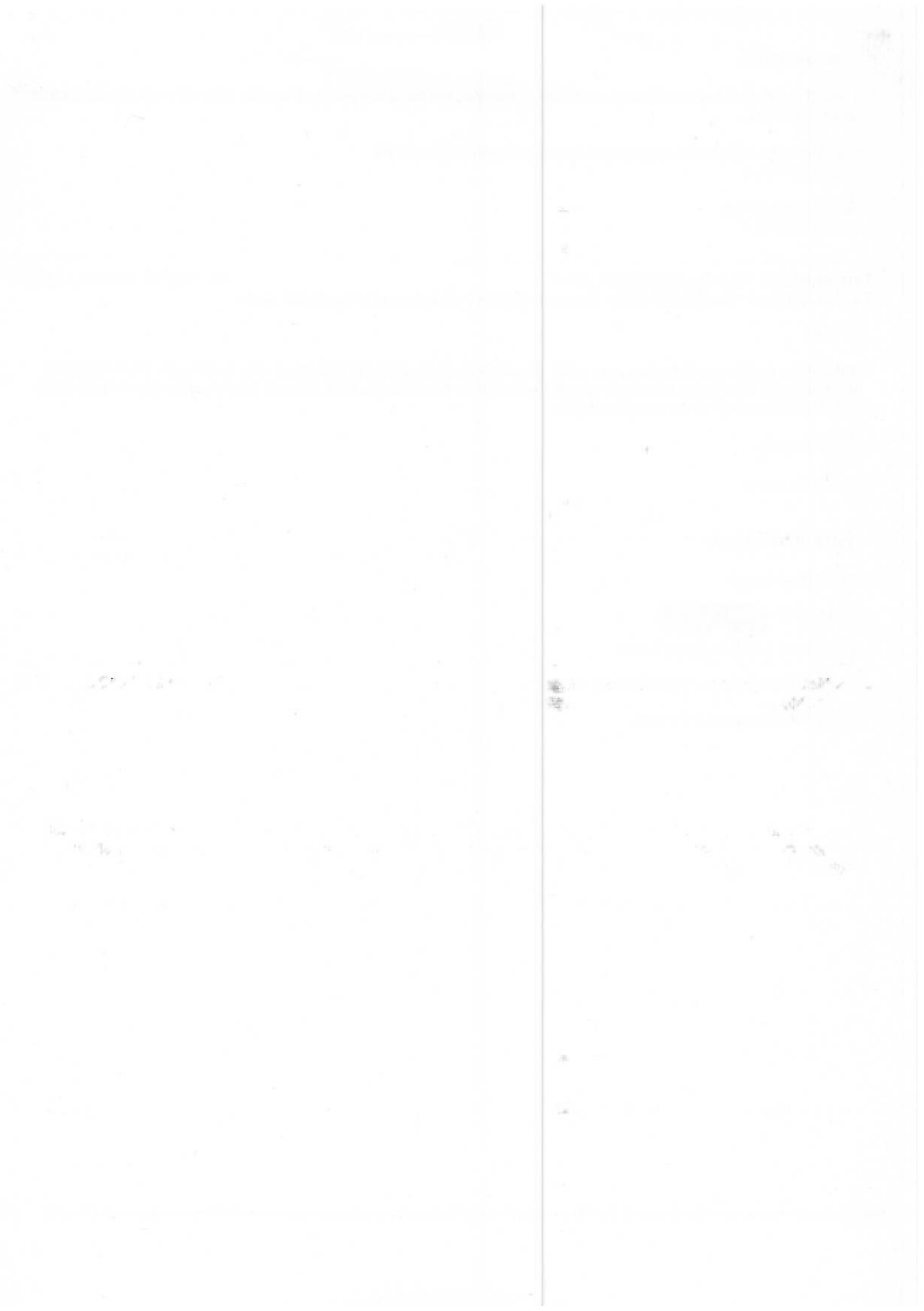
Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Twitter: [REDACTED]

Website: [REDACTED]







Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

**OCE**

5 messages

[REDACTED]  
To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 2:01 PM

Basil

I have changed the sheet slightly but there will be payments going back in - for Ashleigh and Kirsty. Do you know how we get Kirsty's money or does it go to Finance directly.

I am writing a cheque today for the rebate you got from Vodafone. I would like to talk to you about the amount I have to send to Finance with regard to Ashleigh. Maybe you could give me some time next week.

[REDACTED]

Basil McCrea [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 2:04 PM

Can you send me a statement showing the three cheques you sent Ashleigh. Can you also get from payroll the amount they have paid her. Apparently they have over paid her too apparently by £400. I need to reconcile this figures.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile

[REDACTED]  
To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 2:53 PM

Basil

I have scanned the two bank statements showing payments to Ashleigh. They are cheque no 200110 (page 1), 200109 and 200112 (both on second page).

According to your sheet Ashleigh should have received £827.60 for August and September. Finance will not tell me how much they have paid her in total - you will have to ask them. Remember that the amount they show includes National Insurance.

Did you ever talk to Finance about the Dublin travel? They paid £450.90 for travel for June-July. I think you should have got about £250-260 more than that.

[REDACTED]

[Quoted text hidden]

**2 attachments**

Ashleigh Statements0001.pdf  
312K

Ashleigh Statements0002.pdf  
289K

Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 3:16 PM



12/8/2014

NI21 Mail - OCE

To: [REDACTED] Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Thank you. [REDACTED] I have spoken to Finance who will give me the details of what she has been over paid. I need a copy of her contract. When did she actually start on the payroll? I also need the details of the arrangements with Premier.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Basil McCrea MLA  
[REDACTED]

---

To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 3:35 PM

I don't have any of that.

[Quoted text hidden]

[REDACTED]





33AC

C2

Danske Bank

MR BASIL MCCREA

Danske Bank

31 July 2013

Account number: [REDACTED]

Account currency: pounds sterling

Page 1 of 2

**Danske Choice - Statement number 41 - NO.2 ACCOUNT**

IBAN: [REDACTED] MR BASIL MCCREA

Period this statement relates to: 29 June 2013 to 31 July 2013

Entry date	Value date		Credited + Debited -	Credit balance + Debit balance -
Balance as at date of previous statement 28 June 2013				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
22.07	22.07	CH 200110	183.00 -	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Balance as at 31 July 2013

The following conditions apply on the date of this statement.

Arranged overdraft interest rates

Unarranged overdraft interest rates

[REDACTED] per annum  
[REDACTED] per annum

The arranged overdraft interest rate above will only apply when the debit balance exceeds £100. For debit balances of £100 or less, the arranged overdraft interest rate is 0%.

Arranged overdraft interest rates that applied during the period this statement relates to: [REDACTED] per annum from 29 June 2013 to 31 July 2013

Unarranged overdraft interest rates that applied during the period this statement relates to: [REDACTED] per annum from 29 June 2013 to 31 July 2013

**Dispute resolution**

If you have a problem with your agreement, please try to resolve it with us in the first instance. If you are not happy with the way in which we handled your complaint or the result, you may be able to complain to the Financial Ombudsman Service. If you do not take up your problem with us first you will not be entitled to complain to the Ombudsman. We can provide details of how to contact the Ombudsman.

**Maestro Non-Sterling Transactions**

If a transaction or refund is made in a currency other than sterling, we will convert the amount of the transaction or refund into sterling using the Danske Bank Card Exchange Rate (UK). Rates can be found at [www.danskebank.co.uk/travelmoney](http://www.danskebank.co.uk/travelmoney). We will adjust the rate to charge a non-sterling transaction fee of [REDACTED] of the value of the transaction or refund. The adjusted rate will be the rate that appears on your statement.

The terms and conditions of your account apply to the entries which appear on this statement. A copy of our 'How to read your statement guide' is available on our website, by phoning us or by visiting one of our branches.

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Credit facilities other than regulated mortgages are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

Registered in Northern Ireland R568.  
Registered Office: Donegall Square West  
Belfast BT1 6JS Northern Bank Limited  
is a member of the Danske Bank Group.

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8063 NCE BFC420GB 0201 UK 45568 13268 4 3



0000

MR BASIL MCCREA



30470006079876



Danske Bank



30 August 2013

Account number:



Account currency: pounds sterling

Page 1 of 3

**Danske Choice - Statement number 42 - NO.2 ACCOUNT**

IBAN: MR BASIL MCCREA

Period this statement relates to: 01 August 2013 to 30 August 2013

Entry date	Value date		Credited + Debited -	Credit balance + Debit balance -
		Balance as at date of previous statement: 31 July 2013		
01.08	01.08	CH 200109	183.00	
09.08	09.08	CH 200112	183.00	

UNASSIGNED

Balance as at 30 August 2013



The following conditions apply on the date of this statement

Arranged overdraft interest rates

per annum  
per annum

Unarranged overdraft interest rates

The arranged overdraft interest rate above will only apply when the debit balance exceeds £100. For debit balances of £100 or less, the arranged overdraft interest rate is 0%.

Arranged overdraft interest rates that applied during the period this statement relates to:

per annum from 01 August 2013 to 30 August 2013

Unarranged overdraft interest rates that applied during the period this statement relates to:

per annum from 01 August 2013 to 30 August 2013

**Dispute resolution**

If you have a problem with your agreement, please try to resolve it with us in the first instance. If you are not happy with the way in which we handled your complaint or the result, you may be able to complain to the Financial Ombudsman Service. If you do not take up your problem with us, first you will not be entitled to complain to the Ombudsman. We can provide details of how to contact the Ombudsman.

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4/30/2014

NI21 Mail - Fwd: Payslip

BM 4



Basil McCrea - basil@ni21.com

---

## Fwd: Payslip

Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

Fri, Sep 27, 2013 at 3:19 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ashleigh Murray**

Date: Tuesday, 24 September 2013

Subject: Payslip

To: Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Hi Suzanne,

Please find attached a copy of my payslip. I would like to keep the original if that's ok?

Thanks

Ashleigh Murray

NI21

Lisburn Office: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

---

scan0068.pdf  
1274K

[REDACTED]



<b>NI Assembly Members &amp; Support Staff</b>				<b>Paydate</b> 28/08/2013																							
<b>Employee Name</b> Ms Ashliegh Murray		<b>Employee No.</b> [REDACTED]		<b>Tax Period</b> 5 <b>Tax Code</b> [REDACTED] <b>N.I. Number</b> [REDACTED] <b>N.I. Code</b> A																							
<b>Payments</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Time</th> <th>Rate</th> <th>Cash</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Salary</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>804.70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Salary (Back Pay)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>441.29</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Description	Time	Rate	Cash	Salary			804.70	Salary (Back Pay)			441.29	<b>Deductions</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Cash</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Tax</td> <td>3.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NI - A</td> <td>19.04</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Description	Cash	Tax	3.40	NI - A	19.04	<b>This Period</b> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Description</th> <th>Cash</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Taxable Payments</td> <td>1,245.99</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Description	Cash	Taxable Payments	1,245.99
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				<b>Year-to-date</b> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Tax Paid YTD</td> <td>3.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NI Paid YTD - A</td> <td>19.04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Taxable Pay YTD</td> <td>1,245.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Niable Pay YTD</td> <td>1,245.99</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Tax Paid YTD	3.40	NI Paid YTD - A	19.04	Taxable Pay YTD	1,245.99	Niable Pay YTD	1,245.99														
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NI Paid YTD - A	19.04																										
Taxable Pay YTD	1,245.99																										
Niable Pay YTD	1,245.99																										
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				<b>Paid by</b> BACS <b>Sort Code</b> <b>Account No.</b>																							







Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

---

**Fwd: Confirmation of payments to Ms A Murray**

---

**Basil McCrea** [REDACTED]

Wed, Oct 2, 2013 at 12:25 AM

To: Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject: Confirmation of payments to Ms A Murray**  
**Date:** 1 October 2013 11:16:31 BST  
**To:** "Basil McCrea" [REDACTED]

Morning Mr McCrea,

Please find attached memo outlining payments made to Ms Murray as requested.

Regards  
[REDACTED]

Pay Team

work: [REDACTED] Fax: [REDACTED]

email [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

---

This email is strictly confidential. It may be privileged. It is intended for use only by the intended addressee.

If you have received it in error, we would be grateful if you would tell the sender, and then permanently delete it. If you are not the intended addressee, then any copying, distributing,

[REDACTED]



**MS ASHLEIGH MURRAY - START DATE 15/7/2013**


Rate of pay - £804.70 per month

Payments received as follows:-

**August:** £804.70 + £441.29 (July arrears for 17 days worked)

**September:** £804.70

No other payments have been made to Ms Murray and payments received are correct.

  
NI Assembly Pay Team  
30/09/2013



4/30/2014

NI21 Mail - Payments owed

B M 6



## Payments owed

**Suzanne Chalkley**

To: Ashleigh Murray

Cc: Basil McCrea

Wed, Oct 2, 2013 at 6:49 AM

Hi Ashleigh,

As discussed, please find confirmation regarding moneys owed by you back to Basil.

As you know the three cheques of £183 totalling £549 is the amount that is due to Basil and that the payment slip you had sent through to me actually was correct:

£804.70 for August plus £441.29 arrears owed for 17 days worked in July. So there was no overpayment made by the assembly which I'm sure is a relief for you!

I can confirm that on 28.9.13 you gave me £50 as 1st payment.

In order to get this paid back to Basil within a timely fashion can I suggest we set up a monthly payment of £60 for the next 8 months with final payment on the 9th month of £69 to be paid by the 28th of each month, if you are in the position to pay more at any time that would be great. I will set up a spreadsheet to record payments.

Thanks for rearranging your schedule to go to Queens today to help work on the stand with Jacquelyn and co.

Speak to you later

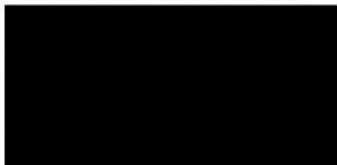
Regards

Suzanne

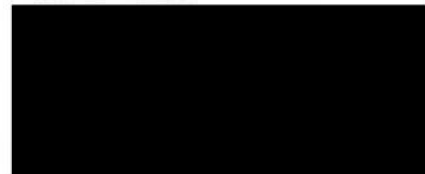




MR BASIL MCCREA



Danske Bank



2 December 2014

Dear Mr McCrea

Thank you for your letter of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

Please find enclosed copy of cheque entered by Ashleigh Murray on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

The two lodgements by Ashleigh Murray for £60 on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013 and £30 on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013 were both made by standing order.

Yours sincerely  
Danske Bank

280500UK 2014.04







Online Banking - Go to [www.firsttrustbank.co.uk/onlinebanking](http://www.firsttrustbank.co.uk/onlinebanking)  
or call now on 028 9034 6034



Date 4.10.13

Pay N121

Fifty pounds

DANSKE BANK  
CLEARING BELFAST 950009

Account Payee

£50.00



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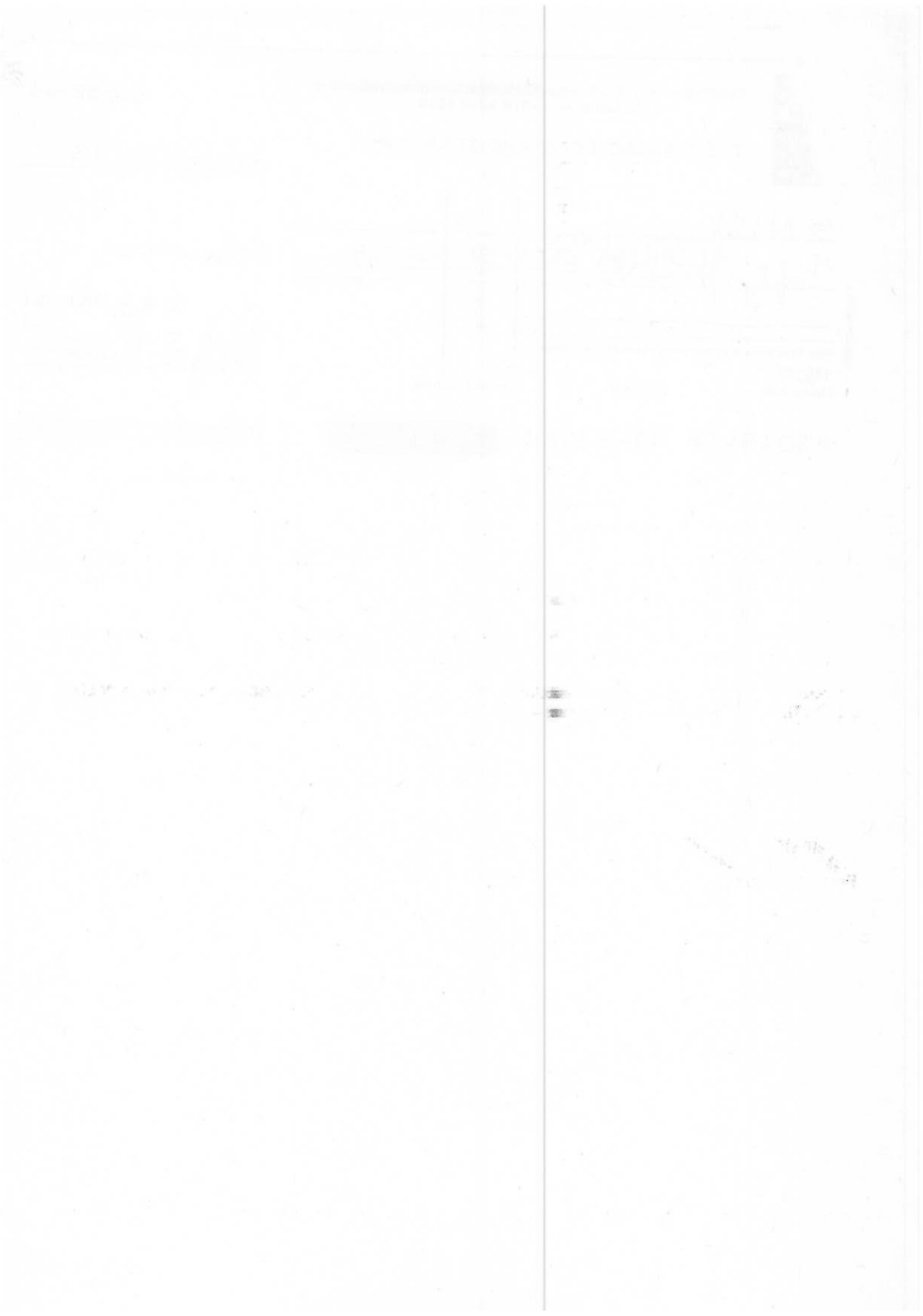
Cheque number

Sort code

Account number



000000005000





Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

---

**Fwd: Costing run down**

Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Mon, Oct 28, 2013 at 5:09 PM

To: Basil McCrea [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ashleigh Murray**

Date: Monday, 28 October 2013

Subject: Costing run down

To: Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Hi Suzanne,

As discussed earlier please find a run down of my daily expenses and bus timetables.

On a daily basis i would get a taxi into work in the morning. I also get a taxi home.

Taxis cost £10 each (£20 Daily)

If i were to get the bus it costs £3.40 each way plus £3.70 (day ticket from [REDACTED]). This would cost just over £10 per day. Although this seems like the more sensible option i do not get home until nearly half 7 at night. Due to home commitments it does not benefit me to do this

A bus would pick me up in [REDACTED] at 9:30am and although the bus timetable says it arrives in Lisburn at 10:05am it does not arrive until 10:20 depending on traffic.

If i were able to start work at 9am and work to 6pm Monday to Thursday it would save me £20 a week or £80 a month. This would be over my contracted hours.

Thanks

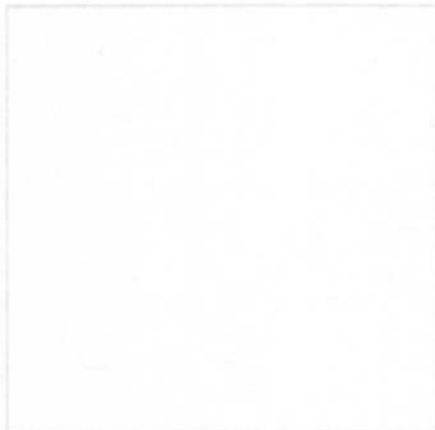
Ashleigh Murray

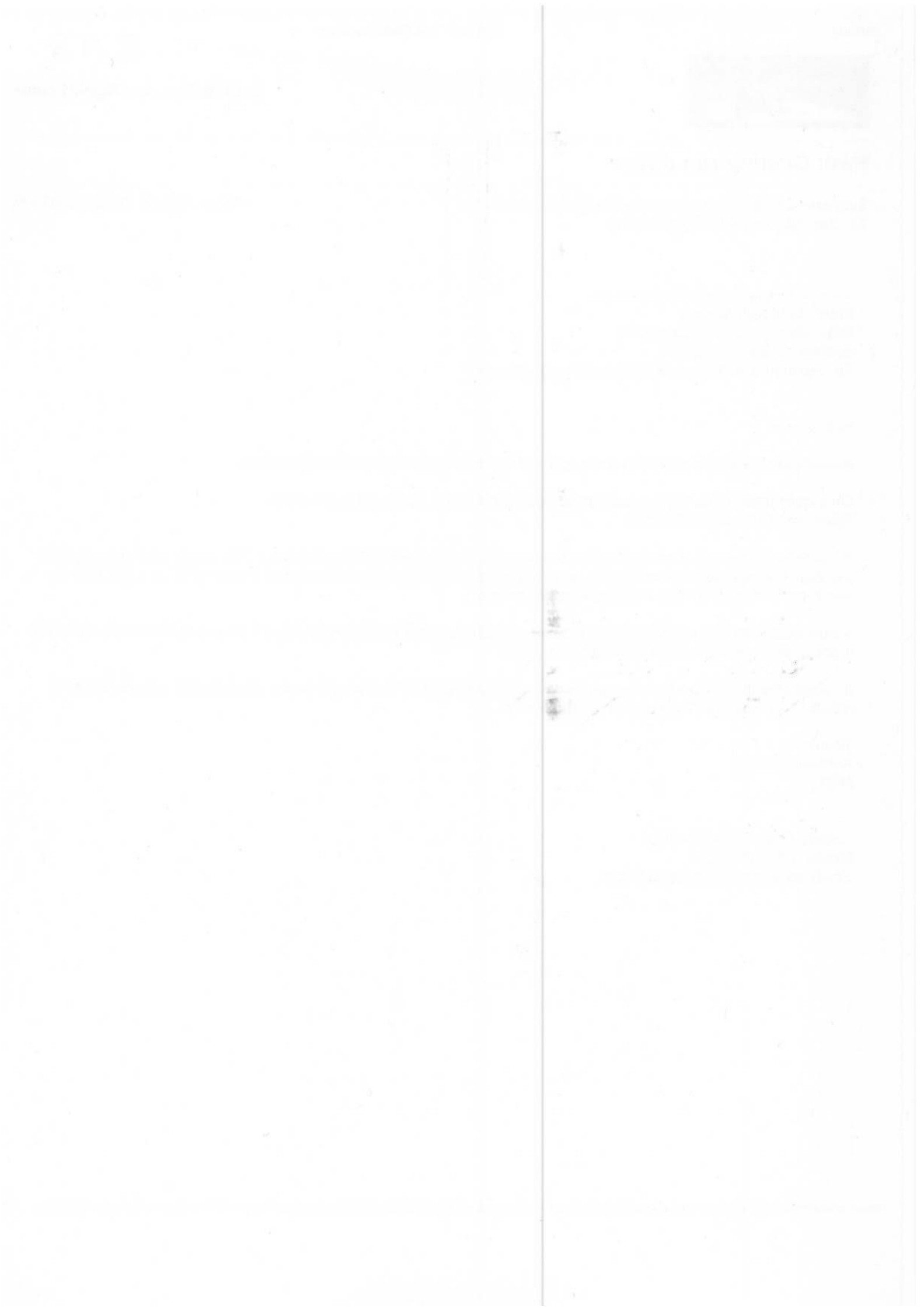
NI21

Lisburn Office: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]





●●○○○ vodafone UK 17:06



.. Contact

Fri 1 Nov 17:40

It really broke my heart to leave! I live the party and everyone in it! I have told Kirsty I will help out on my days off etc! I will also train whoever you want in the office. If the financial situation changes let me know and I will be back in a heart beat! Thank you sooooo much for everything, you took a chance on me when I needed and ill never forget it :) x

I am glad I did and I really hope things go well for you :)

Sat 2 Nov 08:50



iMessage

Send







Kirsty McClay [REDACTED] B. BM 10

**Conference Invitations/Letters**

2 messages

**Annette Holden** [REDACTED]

Thu, Oct 24, 2013 at 3:14 PM

To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED] Ashleigh Murray [REDACTED]

Hi Kirsty/Ashleigh

As the Party does not have the funds to cover the envelopes and posting of the conference invitations we will cover the cost from our OCA. Can you therefore please ensure that the invitations that require posting are delivered to our office and we will use our envelopes and stamps and post them accordingly.

As this is creating an extra burden on me I would be grateful if whomever amongst you is responsible could prepare labels with names/addresses and send them down with the invitations to speed up the process my end. The quicker this is done, the quicker they get to the recipients!

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Annette

**Ashleigh Murray** [REDACTED]

Thu, Oct 24, 2013 at 3:27 PM

To: Annette Holden [REDACTED]

Cc: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Hi Annette,

That's grand, i don't mind doing that :)

Do you know if we can get proper address labels from stormont stationary?

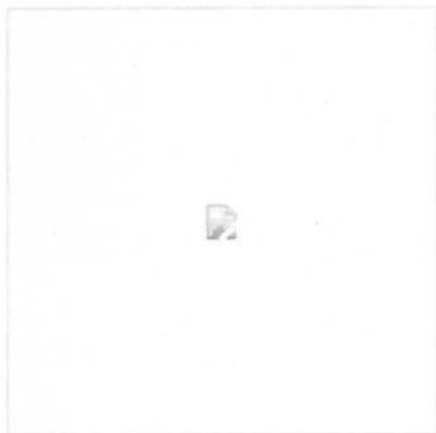
Thanks

Ashleigh Murray  
NI21

Lisburn Office: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]



[Quoted text hidden]







BM 11





Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

---

**Letter and Invite proofs****Lisa Chapman** [REDACTED]  
To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Mon, Nov 10, 2014 at 10:53 AM

Hi Kirsty

These are the print files for the letter and invite. They went to print on 24th October 2013.


Thanks, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Marketing & Account Manager**Design | Web & Digital | Marketing**410 Lisburn Enterprise Centre  
6 Enterprise Crescent  
Ballinderry Road  
Lisburn, BT28 2BP

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**3 attachments** icon\_email\_logo.gif  
3K NI21 Conference Letter PRINT.pdf  
593K NI21 Invite PRINT.pdf  
526K



# ICON

BM 13

Invoice

NI 21  
29A Central Promenade  
Newcastle  
Co Down  
BT33 0AA

Invoice No. 2207  
Invoice Date 28/10/2013  
Cust. Order No.  
Account No. NI21

## Details

Ref: Conference 2013  
Design and print 500 letters and 1,500 invitations

Unit Price	Net Amt	VAT Rate	VAT
450.00	450.00	20.00	90.00

Icon Creative Ltd  
410 Lisburn Enterprise Centre  
Enterprise Crescent, Lisburn  
BT28 2BP, Northern Ireland

Company Number: NI42644  
VAT Registration Number: 809815703

Total Net Amount 450.00  
Carriage Net 0.00  
Total VAT Amount 90.00  
Invoice Total 540.00

PAYMENT TERMS: STRICTLY 14 DAYS  
VAT Reg No: 809815703



YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION TO



BM 14

## PARTY CONFERENCE 2013

Europa Hotel, Belfast  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30am ~ 4.30pm

Dear

Our inaugural Party Conference will be held on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013 in the Europa Hotel, Belfast** and will be your opportunity for us to meet, discuss and communicate with others who are committed to change.

NI21 has had an impact; people are aware of our name, and are interested in finding out more. **We really want to get like-minded people to the conference.** As a valued NI21 member, we need your help in this regard. Please talk to your family and friends, your work colleagues, anybody you think might share our vision for fresh, new politics and in building a better Northern Ireland for everyone. **Bring them along with you.**

**The Conference will be informative and engaging; but it will also be a serious political event and it is important that all our members attend the Party Conference where possible.** We will speak with courage, confidence and conviction about our vision for the future of Northern Ireland and how we will achieve it - engaging and inspiring our most active members and through them, the wider community.

Since our launch I have attended many talkback sessions. The people I have met are an inspiration. We are truly a grassroots movement of ordinary men and women, a diverse group of individuals with unique skills, experiences and backgrounds united by a determination to **reject the sterile politics of the last century and build a better Northern Ireland.**

**We must not underestimate the challenge, nor must we be daunted by it.** A Belfast Telegraph poll confirmed that we are already electorally relevant. Their figure of **4.7%** puts us **ahead of the TUV, UKIP and the Green party combined** and within range of the Alliance and the UUP. An excellent result for a Party barely three months old, **but we must do more; we must step up to the mark.**

Each day exposes the failure of the old Political Parties of the past, the apparently irresistible urge by the vocal minority to **drag us back to the past** and the **lack of political leadership.** This conference is pivotal in helping us promote our aim of building a better Northern Ireland and your presence at and contribution to it is of the utmost importance.

Enclosed you will find your guest pass and two additional guest passes for your friends and family. Each pass admits up to four people and we would encourage you to bring as many people as possible.

Please contact my assistant Kirsty McClay on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] to confirm your attendance.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
**Basil McCrea MLA**  
NI21 Party Leader

NI21, [REDACTED] Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Party Leader:** Basil McCrea, MLA  
**Deputy Leader:** John McCallister, MLA







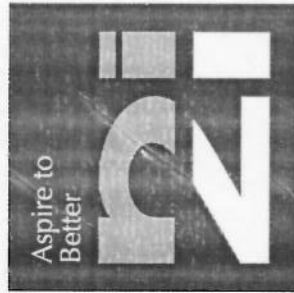
# THE INAUGURAL PARTY CONFERENCE 2013

*Europa Hotel, Belfast*

*Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30am ~ 4.30pm*

## GUEST PASS

*(Admits 2 people)*



*You are invited to join us in helping to make a positive  
change and build a better Northern Ireland*

**LOCATION:** Europa Hotel, Belfast

**DATE:** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**TIME:** 9.30am ~ 4.30pm

*There will be a mid-session break from 1.00 ~ 2.15pm*

**DINNER:**

*You are welcome to join us for a networking dinner in the Europa Hotel following the conference.  
We have arranged the special price of £45 for you and a friend, which is payable prior to the event.*



BM1

**Invoice from Lyreco**

7 messages

**Annette Holden** [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 10:53 AM

To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Hi Kirsty

I've received an invoice from lyreco for the sum of £113.32 - can you please advise me what the purchase was please.

Many thanks

Annette

**Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:04 AM

Annette Holden [REDACTED]

Hi Annette,

It's for name badges from the conference.

Thanks,

Kirsty

[Quoted text hidden]

--

*Kirsty McClay**Assistant to Basil McCrea MLA*[REDACTED]  
Twitter

LinkedIn

**Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:05 AM

To: Annette Holden [REDACTED]

I also have receipts for stamps from the invitations- can I post them to you to be reimbursed?

Thanks,

Kirsty

[Quoted text hidden]

**Annette(NI21)** [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:24 AM

To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Thanks Kirsty re lyreco. Re the stamps; did you purchase them yourself? Just so I know who to write the cheque out to.

Cheers

2/5/2014

NI21 Mail - Invoice from Lyreco

Annette

iPhone email

[Quoted text hidden]

---

**Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED]  
To: "Annette(NI21)" [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:25 AM

Yes they are mine. Will get them in the post to you.

Thanks Annette,  
Kirsty

[Quoted text hidden]

---

**Annette Holden** [REDACTED]  
To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:28 AM

I'm up in Stormont on Monday Kirsty - I can deal with it then for you. I'll bring the cheque book up with me so that I can get both John and Basil's signatures on them. It's not great being out of pocket in January so the quicker we can reimburse you the better ;-)

Annette

[Quoted text hidden]

---

**Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED]  
To: Annette Holden [REDACTED]

Thu, Jan 30, 2014 at 11:29 AM

Great thanks!

Kirsty

[Quoted text hidden]

[REDACTED]



## Cheque Book

2 messages

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Mon, Nov 3, 2014 at 4:25 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Hope you're well. Can you check the NI21 cheque book for a cheque I got for stamps in January? If you could get me the amount and cheque number.

Thanks & hopefully see you soon  
Kirsty

--  
Kirsty McClay  
Assistant to Basil McCrea MLA



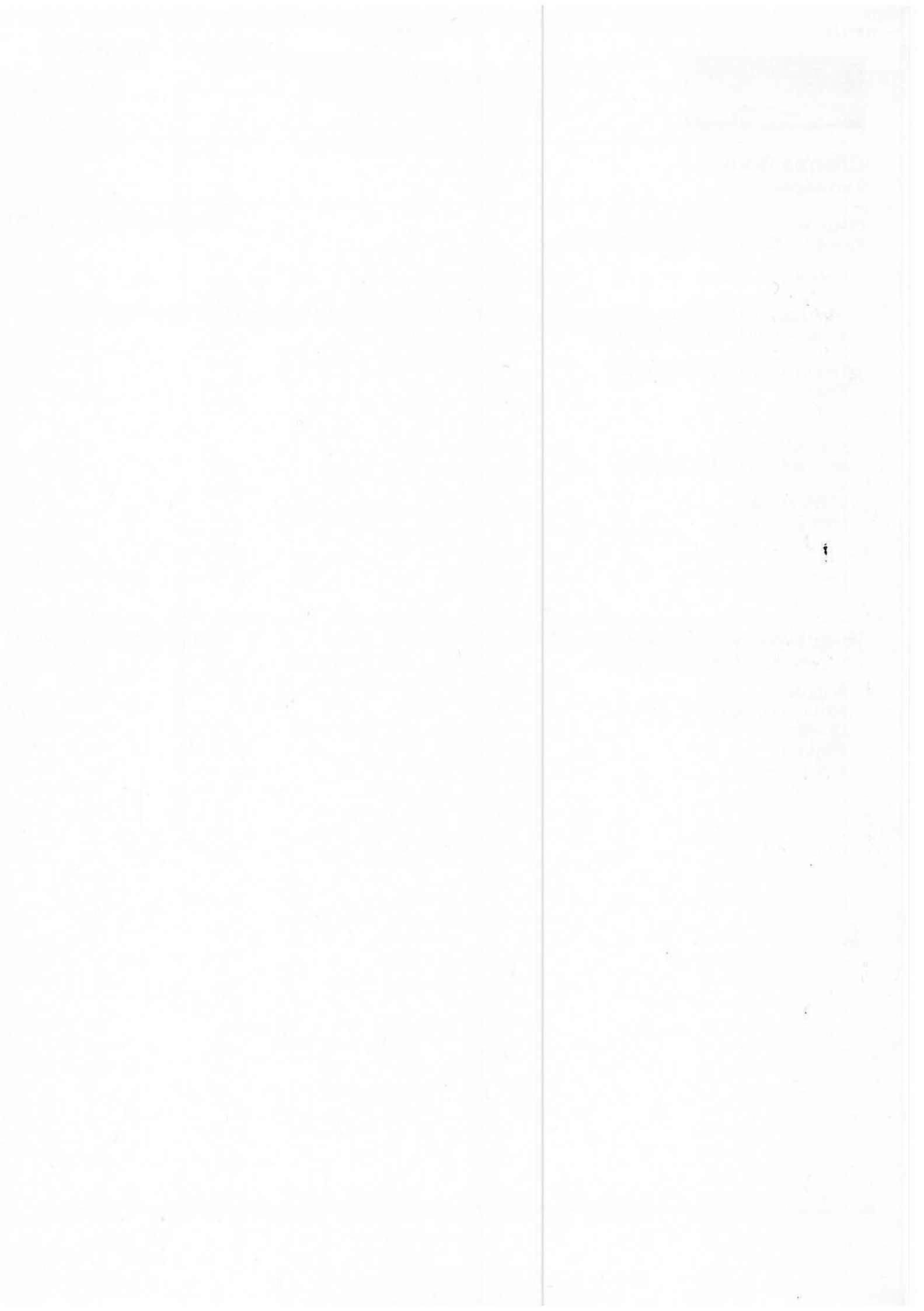
To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Mon, Nov 3, 2014 at 4:47 PM

Hi Kirsty  
3/2/14 ch number 19.  
£41-50

[REDACTED] :)

[Quoted text hidden]





BM 18 1

LYRECO UK LIMITED  
Deer Park Court - Donnington Wood  
TELFORD - SHROPSHIRE TF2 7NB  
Registered office (as above) CRN : 442696 - VAT : 927265703

Delivery Address

N I 21  
[REDACTED], PARLIAMENT BUILDING  
STORMONT, BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

Tel : [REDACTED]

Fax : [REDACTED]

CUST.N° [REDACTED] VAT

INVOICE N° 6530077890 PAGE 1

Representative [REDACTED]

TAX POINT DATE 31/10/2013

PAYMENT TERMS 30/11/2013

Invoice Address

N I 21  
19 MARKET STREET  
DROMORE  
BT26 1AW

Customer Reference

Product Code	Quantity Delivered	Product Description	Unit gross price Excl.VAT	Unit net price Excl.VAT	Total net price Excl.VAT	VAT Code
Visit our exciting NEW web shop today at <a href="http://www.lyreco.co.uk/webshop">www.lyreco.co.uk/webshop</a>						
Delivery 1047820926 of 25/10/2013						
Order No 42482848 of Kirsty McClay Your ref : KIRSTY						
711974	1	BX500 LYRECO S/S ENV 80G C5 WH		12.49	12.49	1

See our general terms and conditions of sale in our catalogue.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE A QUERY ON THIS INVOICE PLEASE CALL OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT \*\*\*

Total Excl. VAT

12.49

Total VAT

2.50

VAT code % rate

1

20.00

Total excl. VAT

12.49

Freight

Total VAT

2.50

Amount Due Inc.VAT

GBP

14.99





**Payments made**

3 messages

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 15, 2014 at 5:26 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],


Can you check when this invoice was paid and send me the cheque numbers details if can get them?

Thanks,  
Kirsty

--  
Kirsty McClay  
Assistant to Basil McCrea MLA

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Twitter  
LinkedIn



 **ICON Invoice.PDF**  
339K

Wendy Burke [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 15, 2014 at 7:23 PM

To: Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Hi Kirsty

This invoice was included in the statement dated 25/11/2013 and was paid with cheque no 17. Dated 8/1/2014.  
Totalling £2850. It went through the account on 13/1/2014.

Hope all is ok and this is the info you need.

Wendy

[Quoted text hidden]

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

Mon, Sep 15, 2014 at 7:25 PM

To: [REDACTED]

That's great thanks a million !

Kirsty

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]



BM 20

---

**Fwd: Notice**

---

Basil McCrea [REDACTED]  
To: Robyn McClay Kirsty [REDACTED]

Mon, Jul 28, 2014 at 3:08 PM

Basil McCrea MLA  
[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jamie Mackrell [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Notice  
**Date:** 30 April 2013 19:42:21 BST  
**To:** Basil McCrea MLA [REDACTED]

Dear Basil,

I'm writing to give you my notice as explained last night. I've had a great two years working as part of the team but feel it is time to move on. I will be moving to [REDACTED] in September to finish my degree in journalism, and have therefore found a job in Belfast where I can work closer to home and save some money before I leave.

I have always been a big supporter and I hope to see you and the new party get the success that is deserved.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Mackrell

---



BM 21

**From:** Jamie Mackrell <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 21 August 2013 11:55  
**To:** McCrea, Basil; Basil Lisburn Office  
**Subject:** Leaving do

Hi Team Basil, hope all is well! As you probably know I'm heading to [REDACTED] on the 1st of September, so as a bit of a celebration I'm having a few drinks at Lavery's on Saturday the 31st of August. I'd be very grateful if any of you could make it, that includes the big man himself.

The team up there, in particular Basil, Fiona and Karen, has been a huge and extremely positive part of my life over the past two to three years, and I am very lucky to have worked as part of that team. It would be great to see you all before I leave.

Speak soon,

Jamie

PS: my mum said Basil was very impressive on [REDACTED] today.



← Messages

Jamie

Contact

14 May 2013 19:11

Hi Basil, just wondering if it's alright for me to head to your party event tonight.

6 Jun 2013 21:38

Good luck on the view, great stuff tonight!

Sat 6 Jul 20:02

Was good to see you aga today, good to get out and about and glad to see so much positivity about the party. You've always been a good friend to me, let me know if you want to grab a pint or a Chinese or something some time.



Message

Send






 Messages

Jamie

Contact

Sat 14 Sep 10:24

Hope all going well in  
 Success for  
the future

All's good here so far,  
looking forward to starting  
uni! Thanks very much :)

Good luck. Hope it all  
works out. See you when  
you get back.

Sounds good, hoping to  
get home around  
Christmas, it'd be good to  
get a catch up around  
then.

Fri 28 Feb 18:13

Greet work on your speech



Message

Send





With reference to complaint 18 in Ms. Murray's complaint.

I have previously supplied a copy of the invoice from Icon Graphics relating to the production of 500 invites to the party conference in November 2013. This invoice was settled by NI21 through cheque no. 17 which was raised on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and cleared on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014.

You will note that this invoice was addressed to 29A Central Promenade, Newcastle, Co. Down BT33 0AA.

The emails below demonstrate that Annette Holden was heavily involved in the financial control of NI21 finances throughout 2013 and early 2014.

This email chain dated 28/10/13 confirms that Ms. Holden raised cheques to pay NI21 bills. This query relates to the payment for pop up poster displays used at the party conference.

<p> <b>Kirsty McClay</b> [redacted] to Annette [redacted]</p> <p>Hi Annette,</p> <p>This invoice is for the party pop ups and banners.</p> <p>Thanks, Kirsty</p> <p></p>	<p>10/28/13</p>
<p><b>Annette Holden</b> [redacted] to Kirsty [redacted]</p> <p>Thanks Kirsty.</p> <p>I already have this one. I have written a cheque out this morning for them and am hoping to get both Basil's and John's signature tonight so that I can start clearing some of the mega debt!!</p>	<p>10/28/13</p>


This email dated 21/10/13 confirms that Annette Holden (although not the party treasurer) prepared NI21 financial returns for the Electoral Commission. The actual returns were made by John McCallister MLA, presumably based on information collated by Annette Holden

<p><b>Annette Holden</b> [redacted] to Kirsty [redacted]</p> <p>Thanks Kirsty.</p> <p>Did we not receive a donation for £5000 from someone? This is important as it is a reportable donation. Can you please find out the details and let me know asp. I have to prepare a report to submit to the Electoral Commission.</p> <p>Many thanks</p> <p>Annette</p>	<p>10/21/13</p>
--	-----------------

## 2 Annette Holden and NI21 Finances

The emails below dated 13/11/13 confirm that Annette Holden handled the party finances before the Party Conference on 16/11/13. The party conference was held at the Europa Hotel and they required payment in advance.

**Annette Holden** [REDACTED] 11/13/13  
to me -  
Hi Kirsty  
I know you're up to your eyes at the moment but when you get chance can you make sure any monies from PayPal are transferred to the NI21 ban account please.  
Many thanks

 **Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED] 11/13/13  
to Annette -  
Hi Annette,  
Transferred around £180 yesterday and £68 just now; will transfer them as they come in to make sure we can pay the Europa!  
Thanks  
Kirsty

**Annette Holden** [REDACTED] 11/13/13  
to me -  
Thanks Kirsty.  
Keep that money rolling in!!

These emails dated 22/01/14 confirm that Annette Holden acted as de facto financial controller of NI21 demanding explanation of invoices.

**Annette(NI21)** [REDACTED] 1/22/14  
to me -  
Hi Kirsty  
I'm in the process of sorting out party finances and have no idea what this invoice relates to. Can you shed some light please.  
Many thanks  
Annette  
iPhone email  
<EStatement.pdf>

 **Kirsty McClay** [REDACTED] 1/22/14  
to Annette(NI21) -  
Hi Annette,  
It was for the sound and cameras etc. at the conference.  
Thanks.  
Kirsty

**Annette(NI21)** [REDACTED] 1/22/14  
to me -  
Thanks Kirsty.  
iPhone email

I have also enclosed copy invoices from La Mon Hotel relating to expenditure on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013. These documents were received by me on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015; having been sent as per the notation on the invoice to Annette Holden at 29A Central Promenade, Newcastle Co. Down BT33 0AA.

BM 24

# LA MON

HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB

★ ★ ★ ★

## Statement of Account

FAO: Basil McCrea  
Northern Ireland Assembly  
Parliament Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Account Ref: MCCR01  
As At: 16-Dec-14  
Page 1

Invoice/								
Date	Folio No	Code	Guest/Detail	Arrival	Departure	Amount	Outstanding	
16/12/13	231327	INV	NI PARTY MEETING	16/12/13	16/12/13	£92.20	£92.20	

This invoice was sent to Mrs Annett @ the address  
Shown on this invoice.

Sorry for any inconvenience but we have just been informed  
by Mrs Annett it should have been changed to this address

Please note, our payment terms are 30 days from date of invoice. Thank you!

90 Days & Over	60 Days	30 Days	Current	Total Due
£92.20	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£92.20

CONFERENCES - GALA DINNERS - EXHIBITIONS WEDDINGS - PRIVATE DINING

41 Gransha Road, Castlereagh, Belfast, BT23 5RF. T:028 9044 8631 F:028 9044 8026 [www.lamon.co.uk](http://www.lamon.co.uk) E:[info@lamon.co.uk](mailto:info@lamon.co.uk)

Company Registration No. NI 004897/VAT Registration No. 517 3861 38



# GUEST INVOICE

VI PARTY MEETING

**LA MON**  
HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB

★ ★ ★ ★

Invoice Date: 16/12/2013

Account Code: NIPM01

Arrival: 16/12/2013

Room:

Invoice/Folio Number: 231327

Departure: 16/12/2013

Purchase Order No:

Date	Description	Reference	Comment	Nett	V.A.T	Amount
16/12/13	Bistro Food	5029	Check 5029, No. 5029	£55.17	£11.03	£66.20
16/12/13	Conference Food	GCCB 1961	LM-BESPOKE ARRIVAL - LM-BESBOKE ARRIVAL	£15.00	£3.00	£18.00
16/12/13	Conference Food	GCCB 1961	LM-BESPOKE MID MORN - LM-BESPOKE MORNING	£6.67	£1.33	£8.00
				£76.84	£15.36	£92.20

The balance outstanding for this invoice is

£92.20

**Charge To:** NI PARTY MEETING  
29A CENTRAL PROMENADE  
NEWCASTLE  
CO. DOWN BT33 0AA

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank-you for staying at La Mon Hotel & Country Club

CONFERENCES - GALA DINNERS - EXHIBITIONS WEDDINGS - PRIVATE DINING  
Gransha Road, Castlereagh, Belfast, BT23 5RF. T:028 9044 8631 F:028 9044 8026 www.lamon.co.uk E:info@lamon.co.uk  
Company Registration No. NI 004897/VAT Registration No. 517 3861 3E

Page 1





Annette Holden wrote cheques to pay the bills for the Party Conference.

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

10/28/  
13

Hi Annette,

This invoice is for the party pop ups and banners.

Thanks,  
Kirsty

Annette Holden [REDACTED]

10/28  
/13

Thanks Kirsty.

I already have this one. I have written a cheque out this morning for them and am hoping to get both Basil's and John's signature tonight so that I can start clearing some of the mega debt!!

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

10/28  
/13

Great thanks.



Annette Holden confirming that she was handling party finances & in receipt of conference invoices.

Annette(NI21) [REDACTED]

1/22/  
14

Hi Kirsty

I'm in the process of sorting out party finances and have no idea what this invoice relates to.  
Can you shed some light please.

Many thanks  
Annette

iPhone email  
<EStatement.pdf>

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

1/22/  
14

to Annette(NI21)

Hi Annette,

It was for the sound and cameras etc. at the conference.

Thanks,  
Kirsty

Annette(NI21) [REDACTED]

1/22/  
14

to me

Thanks Kirsty.

iPhone email



Annette Holden prepared the NI21 quarterly returns to the Electoral Commission.

Annette Holden <[REDACTED]>

10/21  
/13

to me

Thanks Kirsty.

Did we not receive a donation for £5000 from someone? This is important as it is a reportable donation. Can you please find out the details and let me know asp. I have to prepare a report to submit to the Electoral Commission.

Many thanks

Annette

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

10/21  
/13

to Annette

Have updated with [REDACTED] donation!

Thanks,  
Kirsty

Annette Holden [REDACTED]

10/21  
/13

to me

Great stuff Kirsty - thank you.



Annette Holden managing NI21 finances prior to the NI21 Conference on 16/11/13.

Annette Holden [REDACTED]

11/13  
/13

to me

Hi Kirsty

I know you're up to your eyes at the moment but when you get chance can you make sure any monies from PayPal are transferred to the NI21 bank account please.

Many thanks

Kirsty McClay [REDACTED]

11/13  
/13

to Annette

Hi Annette,

Transferred around £180 yesterday and £68 just now; will transfer them as they come in to make sure we can pay the Europa!

Thanks,  
Kirsty

Annette Holden [REDACTED]

11/13  
/13

to me

Thanks Kirsty.  
Keep that money rolling in!!





B M 29

Our Ref: PGB/MCN

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014

The News Letter  
6 – 9 Donegall Square South  
Belfast  
BT1 2GE

By Email

Dear Sir,

**Our Client: Basil McCrea MLA**

We refer to our above named client who has instructed us to write to you following receipt of your email forwarding a statement made by Ashleigh Murray. We understand that you intend to run an article in tomorrow's paper based upon same.

As you are aware, we have only received the statement at 18.43 and we have had very limited opportunity to consult with our Client who has been dealing with local and European elections.

Having considered the statement made by Ashleigh Murray it is clear that she makes a number of very serious allegations, the import of which is that our client has conducted himself in predatory sexual manner and that he has engaged in non-consensual sexual activity. All of this is wholly untrue.

We can only speculate as to the motive of Ms. Murray in making these allegations, but there is probably sufficient in what is recorded in the article in relation to her mental health for you, as a responsible newspaper and publisher, to know that what she says is completely unreliable. Ms. Murray left our client's employment some time ago.

The allegations are of a highly defamatory nature alleging, as they do, criminal conduct. The damage to our client's political and personal reputation will be significant and irreversible. In the event that any of these allegations are published proceedings will be brought against you without further notice for libel.

Yours faithfully

Peter Bowles & Company



**Statement given to Sunday Life for 24<sup>th</sup> May 2014 Edition.**

This has been a very difficult period, not just for me but for my family, my friends, and my colleagues in NI21. I am particularly upset for the NI21 candidates who gave everything for a new vision and for those people who had the courage to vote for them. We have all been the victims of a malicious campaign, purposely timed and instigated purely for cynical political motives.

I have been slaughtered in the press for unsubstantiated and unspecified allegations that I cannot address because I do not know what they are. The one allegation I have been made aware of – not even directly but through an email from a journalist - I absolutely refute. Still, at this point in time, I am not aware of any official complaint or allegation being made about me to the Assembly, the NI21 executive or any other body. Had any such complaints ever been made they would have been dealt with through proper processes which we like any other organisation have always had in place. One has to ask why anyone would choose the hours running up to an election as an appropriate time to address an 'allegation' relating to someone who wasn't even standing in the election, especially knowing the huge efforts that our NI21 candidates put in to fighting this campaign, jeopardising their chances and putting them under totally unnecessary pressure. And why instead of investigating that allegation fully and then going, if appropriate, to the public with verified findings, chose instead to go to the media with sensationalised claims. Observing how gleeful some people have been at my predicament tells its own story.

I have been lambasted for the decision on redesignating from unionist to other, a decision which has been on the table since the launch of our party, a decision which was taken by the executive not by me alone and which I still absolutely stand by. We had to be clear with the general public what they were voting for. We knew that we couldn't officially redesignate until after the next election, but if we had not been transparent with people voting at this time and then changed afterwards we would rightly have been criticised for misleading people and pretending to be something that we were not.

I have been deeply touched and heartened by the enormous amount of support I have received from friends, colleagues and NI21 activists. I can also confirm that information has been brought to my attention which starts to shed light on what is happening here and what is motivating it and I intend to make this public in due course, following proper legal advice. I shall not be making unsubstantiated, uninvestigated allegations in the media. In the meantime, my primary concern is for my family and other matters are in the hands of my legal advisors.

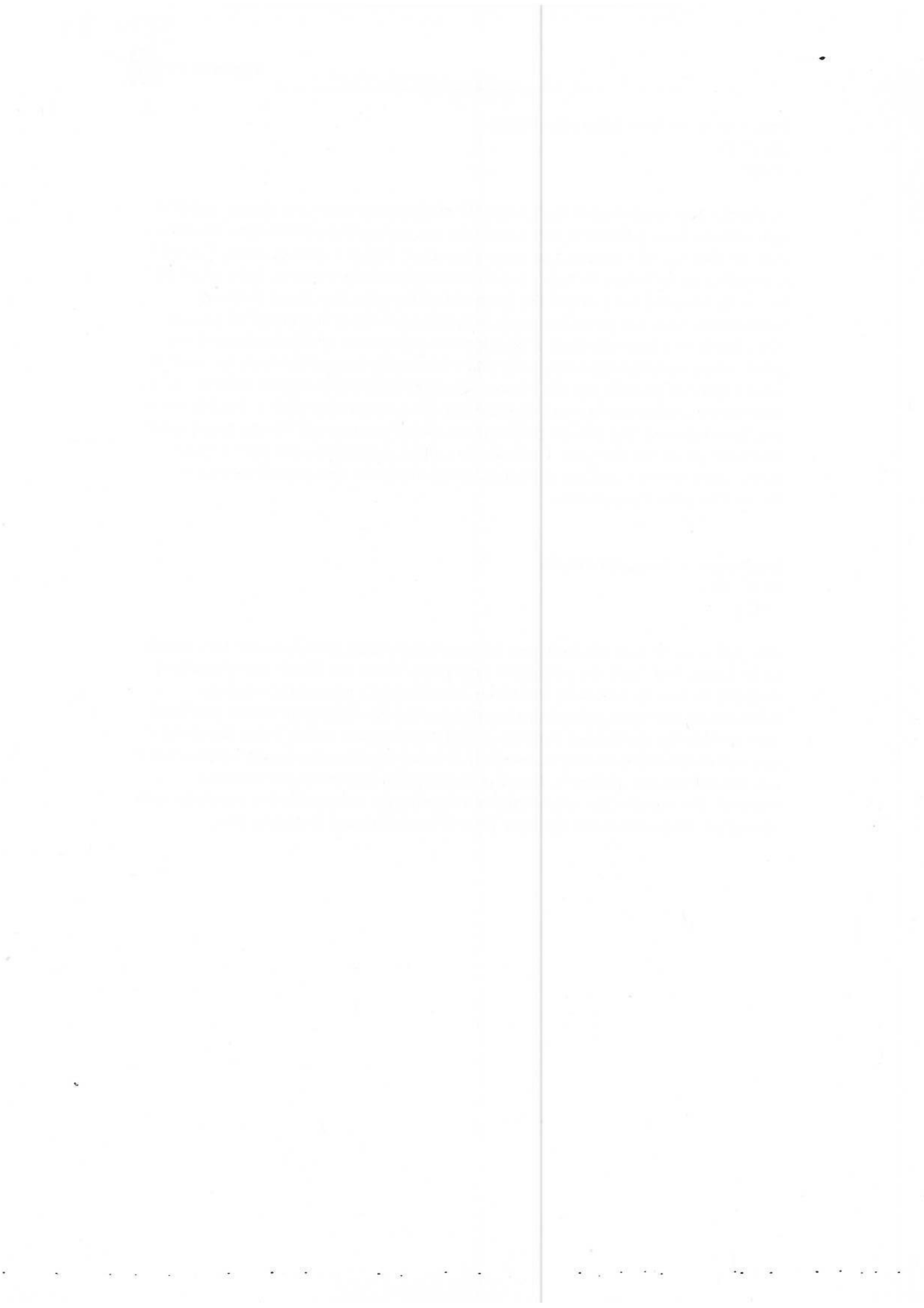


Email received from Jacquelyn Neglia  
25.12.13  
19:06

Hi Basil, I hope you are having a lovely Christmas day with your family and that you are not having the kind of weather we are having here in Toronto. We have had ice storms, rain storms and snow storms all within a span of about 5 days! I wanted to write to you to thank you for the opportunity that you have given me this year working for you and the party. Of all the gifts I received this year, having the chance to go to Northern Ireland and work at Stormont for you and NI21 has by far been the best. It has been an experience which has helped me grow professionally and personally and it has really helped me discover exactly what I want to do with my life. I know we often fight but I am glad to have a boss that wants to hear my opinion, despite not always agreeing with it. I really value you as a boss and as a person and I cannot thank you enough for the opportunity you have given me this year. I will see you again in January once the recess is over, ready to work and get my hands dirty! Enjoy the rest of your holidays! Merry Christmas! Jacquelyn

Reply sent to Jacquelyn Neglia  
01.01.14  
19:50

Hey just a quick note to thank you for your kind email. I am away for two weeks to Sri Lanka but I will see you when I get back. There is a lot of very important matters for you to deal with. Politics is moving into a more serious phase. Galvanising our young people into action is vital. So enjoy your break and steel yourself for the challenges to come. It will require your entire focus, hard work and commitment but it will be worth it. It is not a game, it is deadly serious but it is intoxicating and addictive. There is nothing like it, there is no room for excuses. The results are very public but fighting for the people is a privilege to be savoured. Best wishes for the New Year ☺ Look forward to seeing you.



3a Text messages between Murray and Neglia 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013

Transit	Date	Time	Message
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	21/11/2013	10:59:12	[REDACTED]
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	21/11/2013	10:59:07	They disabled my gmail account! Delete all messages and emails you have from me x
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	18/11/2013	18:57:21	That's what I'm doing :) it's cool I figure if he's gonna play the game- so am I
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	18/11/2013	18:48:32	He's so manipulative it's unbelievable! Just play your cards close to your chest :)
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	18/11/2013	18:44:16	Yeah you and I know it's hard to know what he's really thinking- who knows what's true and what's not\
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	18/11/2013	15:49:20	You need to get dirt on him before you leave to protect yourself! I don't know how people work or think in Canada but trust me you need to protect yourself from him and the lies that he'll tell!\
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	18/11/2013	15:49:20	Grrrrrrrrrr
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	18/11/2013	15:36:04	If he wants to play games ill fucking win! I'm actually shaking with anger! Why the fuck is he screen shot ting my Facebook when I didn't even work for him????
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	14/11/2013	12:33:28	Lol beeee careful don't get me in trouble!!!\
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	14/11/2013	11:28:48	Why did u tell her?\
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	14/11/2013	11:28:42	I am in big trouble - basil knows I talked to a lawyer cuz u told Suzanne!

The party conference at the Europa was on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013. It was around this time that the party chair [REDACTED] mentioned that Jacquelyn Neglia had made an allegation relating to our trip to Cork.

3b Messages between Murray and Neglia 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013

1<sup>st</sup> of November 2013 was Ashleigh Murray's last day at work. She left without notice. I had also had a formal meeting in the morning with Jacquelyn Neglia about unacceptable work related behaviour. Note reference in Appendix 3a

Transit		Time	Message
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	01/11/2013	10:08	What text? X
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	01/11/2013	10:10:02	The one where I told him he was swindling people
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	01/11/2013	10:10:07	LOL...
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	01/11/2013	10:10:08	O aye lol! I'll stand up for you nothing to lose ☺ xx
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	01/11/2013	10:11:54	He threatened me with my job
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	01/11/2013	10:13:47	This is your time to time to get out! When he starts that you'll be gone.
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	01/11/2013	10:13:49	He told me I was in breach of contract and then ignored me for months
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	01/11/2013	11:38:58	To protect myself
From Ashleigh to Jacquelyn	01/11/2013	11:39:30	You should! I got that job now just to tell basil lol x
From Jacquelyn to Ashleigh	01/11/2013	11:39:55	Yes!! Amazing I am so happy for you!!
			Source ip5



This was written by Jacquelyn Neglia in January 2014.

To [REDACTED]

I am writing this letter to apply for the position of NI21 Youth Director. I have been employed with Ni21 since June 20, 2013 and I hope to continue my employment with the party in this position.

When I was employed in June I was hired by MLA Basil McCrea. He recruited me the previous summer while I was completing a program called the Friends of St Patrick Young Ambassador Program. I was fortunate enough to have my placement that summer, at Stormont where I followed Basil around during his work day experiencing the day-to-day responsibilities of an MLA in Northern Ireland.

I can say without a doubt that the trip was a turning point in my life. After my experience working with Basil; I was certain that I wanted to be a politician and that I wanted to affect change.

When I was offered the chance to work here the following summer I knew that it was definitely the right thing to do. When I was recruited by basil the previous summer, he was a member of the UUP. At the time I knew he didn't agree with many of their policies and party values but it was clear to me that Basil was not a UUP politician through and through and he wanted more for Northern Ireland than old tribal politics. When he broke away from the party and started NI21 I knew that it was going to be a party I could get on board with and fully support.

In August my contract was coming to an end with NI21 and I knew that politics was the business I wanted to be in, that I had not done all I could do for the party and that I was not ready to leave Northern Ireland. After speaking with Basil and expressing how much I wanted to continue to be part of the NI21 team and the NI21 movement he agreed to let me stay on but stressed the importance of me trying to find my place in the team where I was able to contribute most effectively.

I have done a lot since my time working with NI21. I have set up the party with a whole new communications system called Google Apps for Business and I have written instruction manuals to assist new members who want to use it. I have also been in charge of a complex campaign management system we acquired called digishare which helps us promote news, events, membership drives etc. I do the majority of work with our social media pages and I have written up the party social media terms and agreements to coincide with that which we give to any new members with ni21.com email addresses. Furthermore, I have been in charge of dealing with any and all website matters; finances, using the cms, tracking analytics, updating press releases, events, news, media etc. I have also helped to rid of the old website which was much too expensive for our budget and have replaced it with a website which is completely free.

Initially, when I got this job, despite having absolutely no background in IT and being barely able to figure out how to restart my router at home, I knew that I wanted to be a part of this team and that no matter what the job was, I was going to find the gap and I was going to fill it. At the time, we needed an IT person but eventually as the party gained some momentum and September came around I was able to get involved with recruiting at the universities. I participated and lead most of our Fresher's Fayres. The first one I will admit was a bit of a disaster but after learning from our mistakes, we did very well at the one which was the most important, the QUB fayre. In a day we got 70 students to sign up for our society, beating out all smaller party societies and even some of the big ones (i.e. UUP). Since then I have been in charge of keeping students on board and getting them involved with the party, it has become my favourite part of my job!

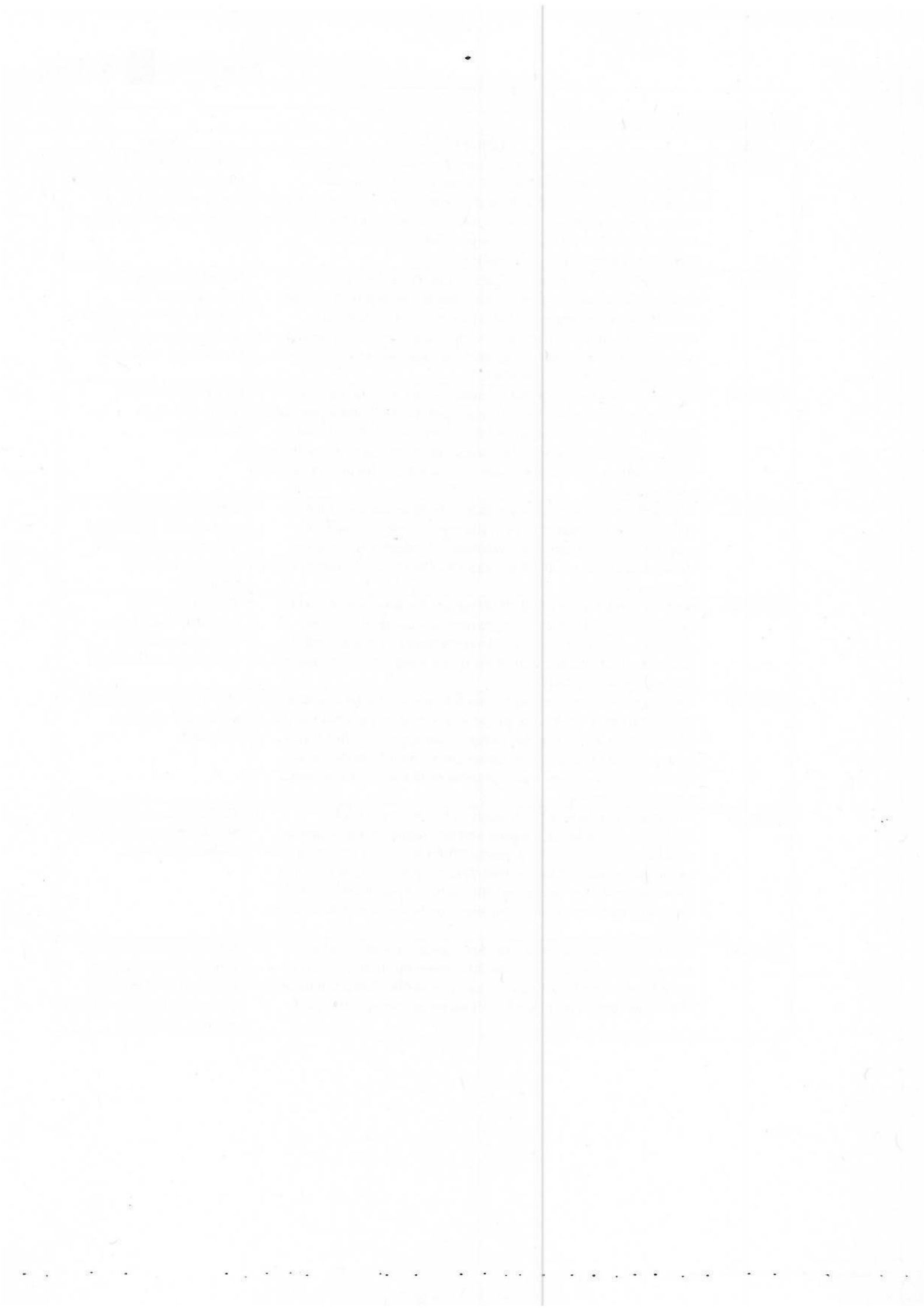
Right now with the youth we have two projects on the go; one is a panel discussion taking place tomorrow at the Titanic Quarter discussing how to expunge the exclusive labels of orange and green and trying to move forward as a united Northern Ireland. Most of the youth, from UU, QUB and elsewhere are assisting with and participating in the event. The other event is a Women in Politics event which we will be hosting in February which will be a joint party society event but will be hosted in QUB. Our aim is to attract more young women to NI21 and the NI21 society.

I have played lots of roles in this party trying to find my place and unfortunately IT is definitely not where I want to stay. I am certain that I would excel as an NI21 Youth Director and it is clear that even in the early stages of creating this youth sector in the party that I have helped to build up a very strong core of young people eager to push this party forward. I know that given more time if it was my sole responsibility to build on this core of people I would finally be able to make a true contribution to NI21.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jacquelyn Neglia

Tweets from Alan Patterson			
Date	Content		Notes
11.02.14	NI21official tweeted, "Deputy Leader [REDACTED] Budget process unable to handle Corporation Tax" and Alan Patterson replied, "[REDACTED] we should have a chat about the failings of the current arrangements which is not fit for purpose!" John McCallister tweets, "[REDACTED] good idea. I'll email you."		Mr McCallister and Mr Patterson clearly remained in contact after Mr Patterson withdrew from NI21.
07.03.14	Sluggie O'Toole had tweeted, "Latest: Uno Duce, Uno Voce-NI21 and the Basil show" In response Alan Patterson tweets, "I resigned as Party Secretary because Basil promotes himself, does not countenance other opinions and is an empty vessel!" In a second tweet Alan Patterson adds, "Support the idea, but leadership is key and substance is rather important."		Mr Patterson suggests he's no fan of Basil McCrea, but no suggestion of inappropriate and/or threatening behaviour.
07.04.14	Off The Record tweeted, "NI21 Timeline – The Road So Far" and Alan Patterson tweets, "From this account it is John McCallister who has been first to make important decisions and to say anything of substance." Alan Patterson then adds, "John has been the leader in thought and action. His inputs are considered and his dealings with people positive."		Mr Patterson highly favourable to Mr McCallister.
12.05.14	[REDACTED] had tweeted, "My response to [REDACTED] re: Solicitor's Letter regarding my social media account – letter & rebuttal" and Alan Patterson tweeted, "This deserves a vote on social media between the [REDACTED] and McCrea interpretation! I know who gets my vote!"		Mr Patterson was in contact with Mr Rainey, who initiated the social media intimidation campaign.
20.05.14	[REDACTED] had tweeted, "NI21 says there was over-whelming support from its Executive tonight for the redesignation from unionist to other" and Alan Patterson tweeted, "I understand that [REDACTED] did not attend and that there are growing relationship issues. Is it really a united party?"		Mr Patterson was obviously involved in discussions with Mr McCallister at this time.
20.05.14	[REDACTED] tweeted, "brought some information to the attention of [REDACTED] 3 weeks ago, will be interesting to see what she did with it." Then Alan Patterson tweets, "Spit it out [REDACTED] call it if you care about it!" and when [REDACTED] posts the information Alan Patterson replies, "I am aware of some of this [REDACTED]. Let's see what the papers uncover!"		Mr Patterson was clearly involved in part this campaign.
21.05.14	[REDACTED] had tweeted, "Through all this NI21 stuff, John McCallister is still being a legend and once again he has it spot on #leader" and [REDACTED] tweets, "think he would've done a better job as leader," before [REDACTED] replies, "I think so. I also think he could save "and grow" NI21 if he is made leader ASAP." Then Alan Patterson tweets, "I have been telling him that for some time!"		Mr Patterson was keen for Mr McCallister to take the leadership of NI21.
22.05.14	[REDACTED] had tweeted, "NI21 is imploding. Following [REDACTED] resignation from the NI21 executive, party treasurer [REDACTED] has just quit the party" and Alan Patterson tweets, "The View tonight may lead to further resignations!" (9.56pm)		Mr Patterson had been briefed by someone on the content of BBC The View- which wasn't due to air until 10 35pm.



BM34ASC



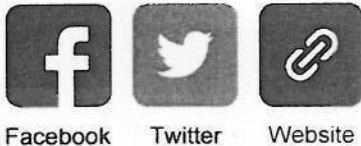
Basil McCrea

## NI21 Talks Back

1 message

NI21  
Reply-To: NI21  
To:

Wed, Jul 31, 2013 at 2:09 PM

[View this email in your browser](#)

Facebook Twitter Website

My name is Alan Patterson and I am the Party Secretary to NI21. It has been an incredible few weeks since the Party launch on the 6th June. Interest in the party is gaining rapidly; as we currently have 258 members and a further 385 who intend to follow the Party development closely.

The Party has organised an event, NI21 Talks Back, in Greenhill Conference Centre Newcastle on the 10-11th August. For further details of the event please click [here](#).

This is a real opportunity to hear and question expert speakers on economic, education and welfare reform issues and the future of politics in NI. It will also be an opportunity to get to know Basil, John and the NI21 team as well as having a say on key policy issues that the party will be developing a

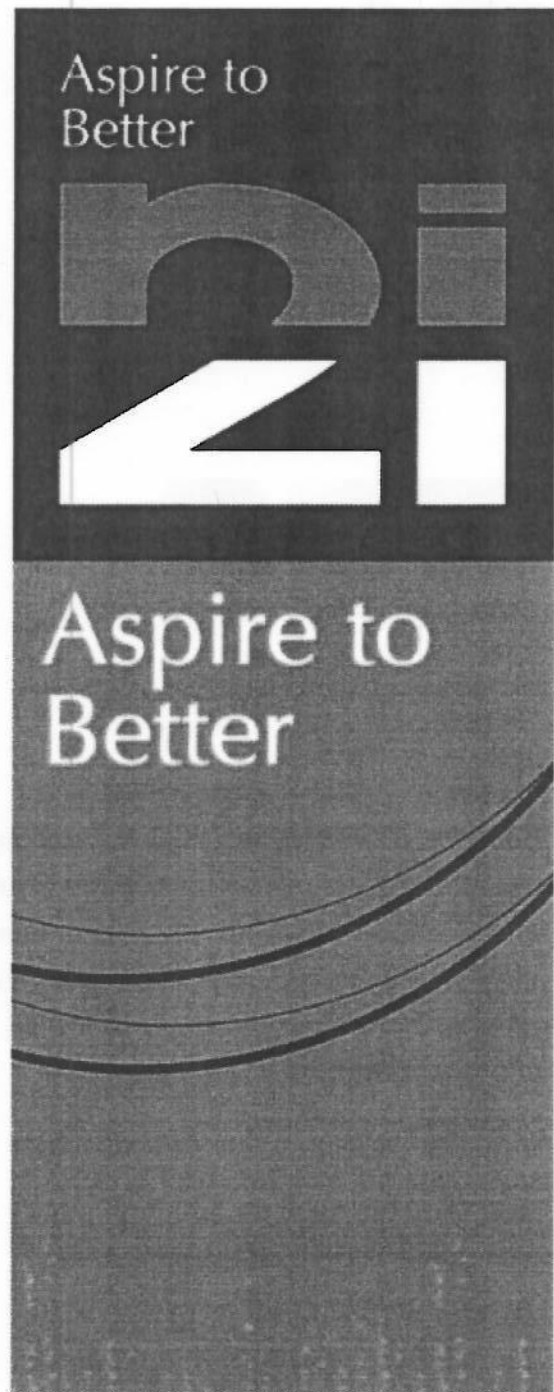
6/9/2015

NI21 Mail - NI21 Talks Back

position on leading to a Party  
Conference in Autumn.

I do hope you will consider attending  
the event and taking the opportunity to  
have your say on some key issues that  
impact on all our futures.

Best wishes,  
Alan Patterson.  
Party Secretary to NI21.



This email was sent to [REDACTED]

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
NI21 · 19 Market Square · Dromore · Belfast, Bfs BT25 1AW



Mr Patterson had an interview in the Newsletter on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.

**McCrea leadership chaotic: NI21's former party secretary by [REDACTED]**

After a day of unparalleled turmoil within NI21, the party's former secretary last night spoke out to say that he left over the disorganization and conduct of leader Basil McCrea.

Alan Patterson, who was appointed party secretary by Mr McCrea last summer, said: "I left the party thinking the party was going to implode around Basil." But last night Mr McCrea hit back, claiming that in fact it had been Mr Patterson who staff found difficult.

Yesterday the new party tore itself apart in public after Tuesday night's sudden decision to redesignate as 'other' rather than 'unionist' was condemned as "crazy" by deputy leader John McCallister.

Mr Patterson who was in post from last May, prior to its launch, until August, joined because he believed in the need for "a party that wasn't tribal" but was unimpressed by Alliance. Mr Patterson, who was a principal clerk in the Assembly, first in overseeing bills going through the Assembly and then as principal clerk of six Stormont committees before retiring two years ago, told the Newsletter; "I saw a party that had enthusiastic people but also a party that lacked a little bit of coherence, which never really got beyond the mantra of 'we don't want to be tribal'... I also saw a party that was very driven by a personality in Basil.

"I have to say that although he appointed me as party secretary in June of last year, I quite quickly became disillusioned really around Basil's management and dealings with people and also around a lack of substance in the party."

He added: "If you want to be successful, you need to be organized. I found in Basil, a man who was disorganized, who brought young people into the party without any notice and would dump them on us and the rest of the staff without any awareness or instruction as to what we were actually supposed to do. You spent an awful lot of your time running around, sorting out problems."

He went on to say: "In terms of why I left, I had a growing perception in terms of Basil's conduct that his behavior towards staff was not at a level that I would expect from... the leader of a party. I broached the subject with him on a number of occasions. I was also concerned about his approach to politics, which was very much focused on social media, rather than substance. I really got the impression that he was a bit of an empty vessel; there wasn't anything of substance in there."







Mr Patterson said that Mr McCallister's claim that Monday's executive meeting was chaotic, without an agenda or any prior consultation did not shock him. "The idea that he would have an agenda, without minutes being taken, with a limited amount of people being invited seems to be fairly what I would expect from Basil and what I would expect from the party."

But last night Mr McCrea released sections of emails which he said he was sent by Mr Patterson last August, one of which said he was "happy to take on a new role. Mr McCrea said that an email from Mr Patterson last September actually showed that some staff had problems with Mr Patterson's management style. "While I can understand why the malicious and wholly incorrect information provided might have caused you concerns I am not prepared to work under a cloud of mischief making," Mr Patterson had said.

"I have decided to withdraw from further active participation in NI21 but will be voting for the party at elections."





	<p>NWMCNICKLE retweeted</p> <p><b>Basil McCrea</b> [REDACTED] Giving some of [REDACTED] Community Group [REDACTED] a tour of Parliament Buildings.</p> 
	<p><b>NWMCNICKLE</b> [REDACTED] 9 Apr 2014 Few would argue Stormont is utterly useless at anything other than lining politicians pockets! Well said Basil <a href="http://belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/...">belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/...</a></p>
	<p><b>NWMCNICKLE</b> [REDACTED] 12 Apr 2014 DUP trying to win votes by playing on people's fears while NI21 aim to give people hope for the future. Simple choice on 22nd May!</p>
	<p><b>NWMCNICKLE</b> [REDACTED] 23 May 2014 So glad I voted for [REDACTED] lol</p> <p>RETWEET 1 </p> <p>1:46 a.m. · 23 May 2014 · Details</p>



**NWMCNICKLE** [REDACTED] 23 May 2014

If we are to have any chance of saving NI21 the members need to rally behind [REDACTED]

RETWEETS

2

FAVOURITES

2



2:04 a.m. - 23 May 2014 · Details



NWMCNICKLE retweeted



**Belfast News Letter** News Letter · 28 May 2014

NI21 candidate slams move by Basil McCrea to appoint chair - Belfast Newsletter: [newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/...](http://newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/)

RETWEETS

3

FAVOURITE

1



2:49 a.m. - 28 May 2014 · Details



**NWMCNICKLE** [REDACTED] 17 Jun 2014

"This has been the most toxic and poisonous experience of my entire life."  
Yep that about sums up my experience also  
#notsofreshpolitics

RETWEET

1

FAVOURITES

2



1:46 p.m. - 17 Jun 2014 · Details



**NWMCNICKLE** [REDACTED] 2 Jul 2014

Really hope John McCallister retains his seat, a thoroughly decent man and hardworking MLA.

4

5



**Alan Patterson**

Follow

[REDACTED] John embodies all that was best about non-tribal politics and has led on the need for an opposition. NIA needs him!

FAVOURITES

2



NI21 candidate slams move by Basil McCrea to appoint chair

██████████  
Wednesday 28 May 2014

NI21, which is facing an uncertain future after open divisions and a disastrous first election, has a new chairwoman.

The party's first chair, ██████████ quit the role before polling had even finished on Thursday and subsequently said that she was finished with politics.

Yesterday, although the party made no formal announcement, party sources confirmed that leader Basil McCrea had appointed ██████████ to take over from ██████████. It is understood that ██████████ will initially take up the role on an interim basis.

In Thursday's council election, ██████████ actually polled fewer votes than her predecessor, being supported by 169 voters in Comber, as opposed to 256 voters who backed ██████████ in Balmoral.

One of ██████████ first tasks will be to decide on the party response to a report into allegations of sexual misconduct against the party leader. The allegations are strongly denied by Mr McCrea, who has suggested a conspiracy against the party, and he has said that he is taking legal action over the claims, though has refused to say who he is legally threatening.

Neil McNickle, an NI21 candidate in Lisburn, condemned the decision and called on the party leader to quit.

He told the News Letter: "It is disappointing and totally undemocratic that party leader Basil McCrea has decided to appoint ██████████ without any consultation with the party membership.

"Further, this move is unlikely to build confidence within the party at a time when morale is at rock bottom following the disastrous election results."

He added: "I would call on Mr McCrea to step aside and give the party a chance to rebuild."

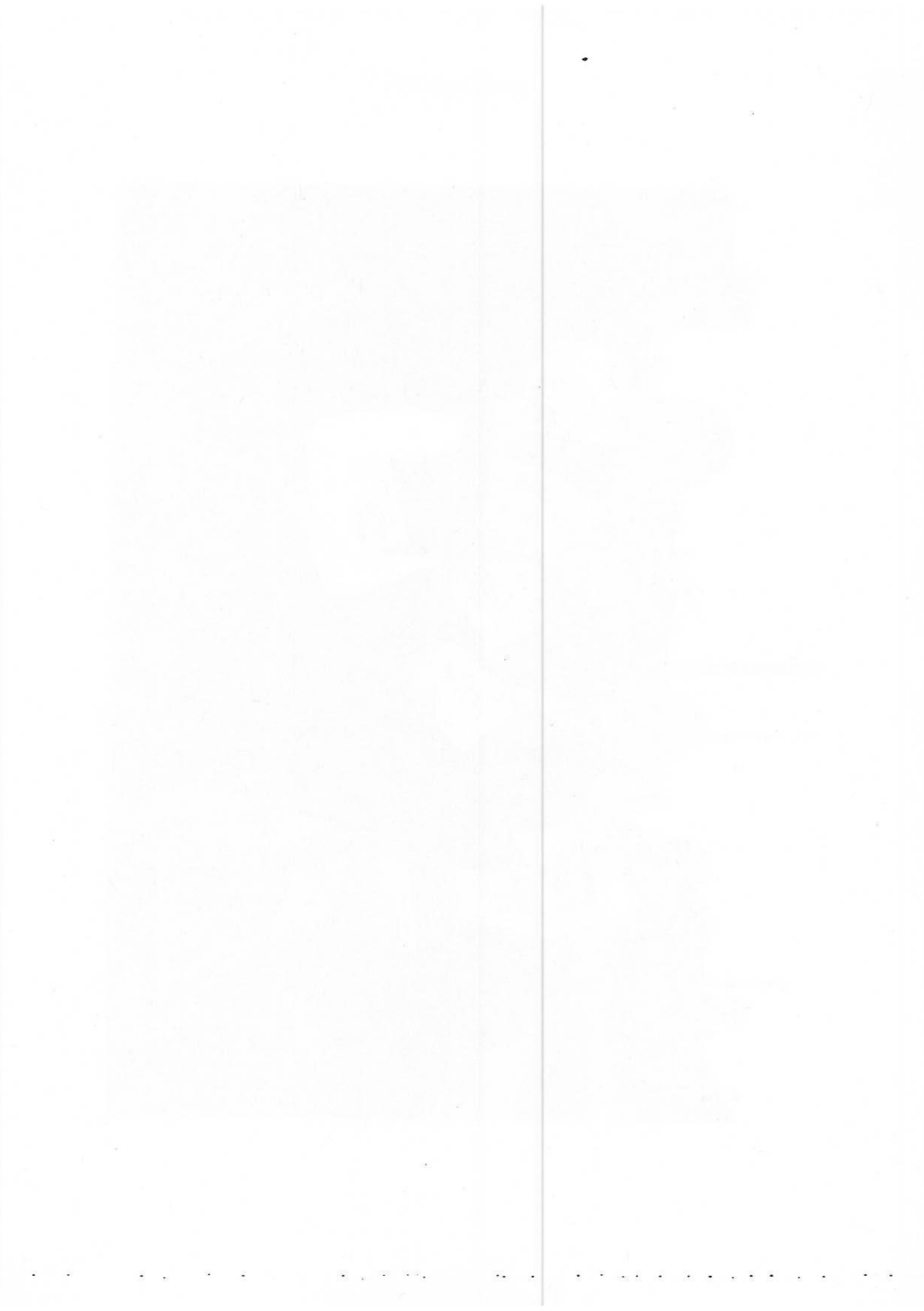
Yesterday ██████████ who was also NI21's European election candidate, polling 10,553 votes, was one of several candidates not to show up for the declaration.

Mr McCrea, who appeared at the count on Monday and spoke to journalists, was also absent yesterday but deputy leader John McCallister and director of communications Nigel Macauley spent most of the day at the count.



## Photograph

This photograph was redacted by the Committee.



## Discussions re Lisburn Office

BM 37

Appendix 6a. Text exchange with Ashleigh Murray 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013

To: Ashleigh Murray

Details

Hey! I assume you've seen the Sunday world?

yes. What are you doing reading such rubbish?

Lol I wasn't, my neighbour showed me it! Only looked at the front page, didn't read it

Good for you! What are you up to?

Heading to Newcastle to toleymore! You enjoying the sunshine?

Yes, in the back garden. In need of a rest. Keen to have a chat with you next week. Really would like you to start doing some local press issues for me plus we need to get Lisburn office sorted out. :)

Cool! I'm happy to start work on it, if you can supply some funds for paint etc i can have the office up and running in a week! [redacted] doing all the electrics for free including materials! Gonna talk to [redacted] about an English course n if I enjoy it might do a short journalism course too

Good for you! and a big thank you to Scott as well.

Don't worry, he enjoys it :)!

Appendix 6b. Email conversation with Alan Patterson 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013

Lisburn office

Inbox

12 15 20



Basil McCrea [redacted]

7/23/13

to Alan

What are you intending to achieve by going to Lisburn office tomorrow? It is really really important that Ashleigh spends time at work!!!!

Alan Patterson [redacted]

7/23/13

to me

Part of her work will be getting the office ready. She also needs to plan out how she will deliver an effective role when there. I will be working with her to develop clear objectives and a work plan with relevant targets

Ashleigh is also meeting with some people in Lisburn tomorrow on a constituency matter. She seems uncertain on how to take this aspect of her work forward and has asked me to attend the meeting with her, which I am happy to do.

How's the holiday going? you must be some shade of brown by now!

Regards





BM 38

From: **Ashleigh Murray**  
Date: Monday, 28 October 2013  
Subject: Costing run down  
To: Suzanne Chalkley [REDACTED]

Hi Suzanne,

As discussed earlier please find a run down of my daily expenses and bus timetables.

On a daily basis i would get a taxi into work in the morning. I also get a taxi home.  
Taxis cost £10 each (£20 Daily)

If i were to get the bus it costs £3.40 each way plus £3.70 (day ticket from [REDACTED]). This would cost just over £10 per day. Although this seems like the more sensible option i do not get home until nearly half 7 at night. Due to home commitments it does not benefit me to do this

A bus would pick me up in [REDACTED] at 9:30am and although the bus timetable says it arrives in Lisburn at 10:05am it does not arrive until 10:20 depending on traffic.

If i were able to start work at 9am and work to 6pm Monday to Thursday it would save me £20 a week or £80 a month. This would be over my contracted hours.

Thanks  
Ashleigh Murray



Ms Murray posted this on Facebook on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

BM39



**Ashleigh Murray**

4 September 2013

Good news 😊! Doing my QCF level 3 in business admin which is the equivalent to 2 A Levels 😊! Never thought I'd see the day! Big thanks to Basil McCrea MLA for giving me the opportunity 😊 xx

Like Comment Share

👍 20 💬 8

Sponsored



RESTRICTED

TR 1

**Internal Memo**

From: [REDACTED]  
Director of Facilities/Keeper of the House

Date: 14 October 2014

To: [REDACTED]  
Clerk/ Chief Executive



You had also requested that I provide details for the provision of pre-paid envelopes and headed Assembly notepaper for Mr McCrea during the period 1st July 2013 to 31 December 2013 inclusive. Full details are set out in the table below.

Date	Description	Net Cost (£)	VAT (£)	Total (£)
01/08/2013	1 <sup>st</sup> class C5 prepaid envelopes (100)	70.54	2.11	72.65
24/10/2013	1 <sup>st</sup> class DL n/w prepaid envelopes (100)	67.58	1.52	69.10
03/12/2013	1 <sup>st</sup> class DL n/w prepaid envelopes (100)	67.58	1.52	69.10

I trust that this is of some assistance.



TR2

# MLA Office Consumables Requisition Form

Member's Name	Basil McCrea
Contact Name	
Contact Telephone Number	
Delivery Address (if applicable)	

\* Please state if items are to be collected from Office Resources, Room B34b (C) or delivered to constituency office (D)

Description	Unit	Min Units for Delivery	Qty Req.	D/C*
<b>Copier Paper</b>				
A4 White copier paper	500	5		
A3 White copier paper	500	5		
Please note that A4 & A3 white copier paper is not charged to the MLA allowance				
<b>Paper &amp; Card</b>				
A4 Paper - Address	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Crest	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Plain Ivory	500	No Delivery		C
Compliments Slips	500	No Delivery		C
<b>Envelopes</b>				
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery	1	C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - White - DL	100	10		
Env - White - Win	100	10		
Env - White - A5	100	5		
Env - White - A4	50	5		
Env - Crested Ivory	100	No Delivery		C
<b>Files &amp; Folders</b>				
Archive Box	1	10		
Box file	1	1		
Dividers 1 - 5 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 10 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 20 (coloured)	1	set		
Document wallet	1	50		
Lever Arch File	1	10		
Magazine File (plastic)	1	1		
Magazine File (cardboard)	1	20		
Polypockets	100	1		
Report file	1	25		
Ringbinders	1	10		
Square cut folders - buff	100	1		
Square cut folders - coloured	100	1		
Suspension files	50	1		
<b>Notebooks, Pads &amp; Tabs</b>				
A4 Refill Pad	1	10		
Shorthand Notebook	1	1		
A4 Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Softback Notebook	1	10		
Post-it pad - medium	1	12		
<b>IT Consumables &amp; Equipment</b>				
HP CE410A Cartridge - Bk (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE411A Cartridge - Cy (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE412A Cartridge - Ye (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE413A Cartridge - Ma (Const.)	1	1		





Description	Unit	Min Units for Delivery	Qty Req.	D/C*
HP 507A Cartridge - Bk (Parl. Build)	1	1		
HP 507A Cartridge - Cy (Parl. Build)	1	1		
HP 507A Cartridge - Ye (Parl. Build)	1	1		
HP 507A Cartridge - Ma (Parl. Build)	1	1		
HP Fuser Unit for HP Laserjet 500 (Parl. B	1	1		
HP CP3525 Toner Collecting Kit (Parl. Buil	1	1		
Screen Wipe	1	100		
Mouse Mat	1	1		
Calculator	1	1		
<b>Pens &amp; Pencils</b>				
Biro Pens - Blue	1	50		
Biro Pens - Black	1	50		
Biro Pens - Red	1	50		
Pencils	1	12		
Highlighters	1	10		
Marker - permanent	4	1		
Marker - drywipe	4	1		
<b>Desktop equipment &amp; misc items</b>				
Address Labels (14 per sheet)	100	1		
Address Labels (21 per sheet)	100	1		
Batteries - AA	1	4		
Batteries - AAA	1	10		
Batteries - C	1	1		
Blu tack	pack	1		
Desk tidy	1	1		
Drawing pins	100	1		
Erasers	1	30		
Hole punch (2 hole)	1	1		
Paperclips - large	100	1		
Pritt stick	1	1		
Ruler	1	1		
Scissors	1	1		
Self-adhesive tape - small	1	8		
Self-adhesive tape - large	1	6		
Sharpeners	1	1		
Stapler	1	1		
Staples	box	1		
Tape dispenser - Large	1	1		
Tipp-ex bottle	1	1		

[illegible]

I confirm that the above items will be used wholly, necessarily and exclusively on Assembly business and any cumulative expenditure over £1000 in each financial year will be charged to Office Cost Expenditure (OCE).

PRINT NAME: BASIL MICHEA (MLA ONLY)

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: 11/1/73

For Official Use Only		
Input	[REDACTED]	Date 12/21/13
Checked	[REDACTED]	Date 12/10/10



# MLA Office Consumables Requisition Form

TB4  
TR3

Member's Name	BASU MICHAEL
Contact Name	
Contact Telephone Number	
Delivery Address (if applicable)	

\* Please state if items are to be collected from Office Resources Room B34b (C) or delivered to constituency office (D)

Description	Unit	Min Units for Delivery	Qty Req.	D/C*
<b>Copier Paper</b>				
A4 White copier paper	500	5		
A3 White copier paper	500	5		
Please note that A4 & A3 white copier paper is not charged to the MLA allowance				
<b>Paper &amp; Card</b>				
A4 Paper - Address	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Crest	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Plain ivory	500	No Delivery		C
Compliments Slips	500	No Delivery		C
<b>Envelopes</b>				
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery	1	C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - White - DL	100	10		
Env - White - Win	100	10		
Env - White - A5	100	5		
Env - White - A4	50	5		
Env - Crested Ivory	100	No Delivery		C
<b>Files &amp; Folders</b>				
Archive Box	1	10		
Box file	1	1		
Dividers 1 - 5 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 10 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 20 (coloured)	1	set		
Document wallet	1	50		
Lever Arch File	1	10		
Magazine File (plastic)	1	1		
Magazine File (cardboard)	1	20		
Polypockets	100	1		
Report file	1	25		
Ringbinders	1	10	1	C
Square cut folders - buff	100	1		
Square cut folders - coloured	100	1		
Suspension files	50	1		
<b>Notebooks, Pads &amp; Tabs</b>				
A4 Refill Pad	1	10		
Shorthand Notebook	1	1		
A4 Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Softback Notebook	1	10		
Post-it pad - medium	1	12		
<b>IT Consumables &amp; Equipment</b>				
HP CE410A Cartridge - Bk (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE411A Cartridge - Cy (Const.)	1	1	1	C
HP CE412A Cartridge - Ye (Const.)	1	1	1	C
HP CE413A Cartridge - Ma (Const.)	1	1	1	C







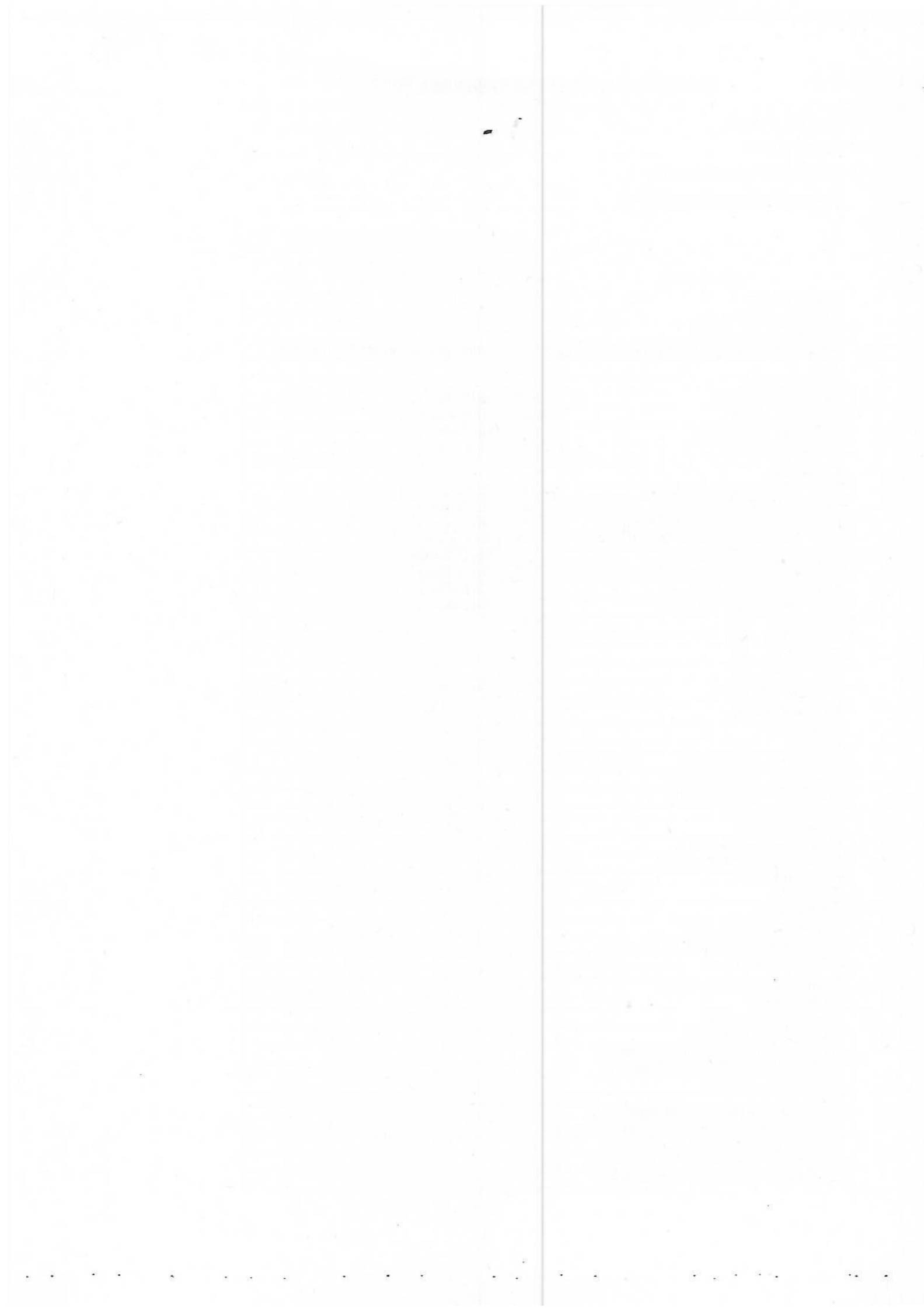
TR4

# MLA Office Consumables Requisition Form

Member's Name	
Contact Name	
Contact Telephone Number	
Delivery Address (if applicable)	

\* Please state if items are to be collected from Office Resources Room B34b (C) or delivered to constituency office (D)

Description	Unit	Min Units for Delivery	Qty Req.	D/C*
<b>Copier Paper</b>				
A4 White copier paper	500	5		
A3 White copier paper	500	5		
Please note that A4 & A3 white copier paper is not charged to the MLA allowance				
<b>Paper &amp; Card</b>				
A4 Paper - Address	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Crest	500	No Delivery		C
A4 Paper - Plain ivory	500	No Delivery		C
Compliments Slips	500	No Delivery		C
<b>Envelopes</b>				
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery	1	C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - DL Window	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A5	100	No Delivery		C
Env - 1st Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - 2nd Class P-Paid - A4	50	No Delivery		C
Env - White - DL	100	10		
Env - White - Win	100	10		
Env - White - A5	100	5		
Env - White - A4	50	5		
Env - Crested Ivory	100	No Delivery		C
<b>Files &amp; Folders</b>				
Archive Box	1	10		
Box file	1	1		
Dividers 1 - 5 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 10 (coloured)	1	set		
Dividers 1 - 20 (coloured)	1	set		
Document wallet	1	50		
Lever Arch File	1	10		
Magazine File (plastic)	1	1		
Magazine File (cardboard)	1	20		
Polypockets	100	1		
Report file	1	25		
Ringbinders	1	10		
Square cut folders - buff	100	1		
Square cut folders - coloured	100	1		
Suspension files	50	1		
<b>Notebooks, Pads &amp; Tabs</b>				
A4 Refill Pad	1	10		
Shorthand Notebook	1	1		
A4 Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Hardback Notebook	1	1		
A4 Spiral Bound Softback Notebook	1	10		
Post-it pad - medium	1	12		
<b>IT Consumables &amp; Equipment</b>				
HP CE410A Cartridge - Bk (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE411A Cartridge - Cy (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE412A Cartridge - Ye (Const.)	1	1		
HP CE413A Cartridge - Ma (Const.)	1	1		









TR 5

ASHLEIGH MURRAY - [REDACTED]  
EMPLOYED [REDACTED]

**PAYMENT HISTORY**

Payment date	Gross	Net
28/8/2013	£1245.99	£1223.55*
26/9/2013	£804.70	£782.26
29/10/2013	£820.30**	£792.98
27/11/2013	£27.34	£27.34

\* Arrears paid for 15/7/13 – 31/7/13 of £441.29 + monthly salary of £804.70

\*\* Pay increase wef 1/10/2013 from £804.70pm to £820.30pm (*for minimum wage*).

[REDACTED] 15/10/14



10

16/10



TR6

Northern Ireland Assembly  
Pay Team

FORM A1

# AMENDED SECRETARIAL SALARIES AND EMPLOYEE DETAILS

## AUTHORITY FOR DIRECT PAYMENT OF SECRETARIAL SALARIES

I, Basil McCrea, Member of Assembly for the Lagan Valley constituency, hereby authorise the Pay Team, Northern Ireland Assembly, to amend the existing contractual details of the under mentioned employee who is employed on Assembly business under my Office Cost Allowance.

Employee name:

Ashleigh Murray

Employee Payroll no (if known):

Reason for change to existing contractual terms:

PLEASE COMPLETE BELOW IF ANY CONTRACTUAL DETAILS HAVE CHANGED

*SALARY DETAILS REVISED TO:	£ <u>6.31</u>	<del>Monthly</del> / <u>Annual</u> <u>hourly</u> (Delete as appropriate)
CONTRACTUAL HOURS REVISED TO:	<u>30</u>	
ANNUAL LEAVE REVISED TO:		
CHANGES EFFECTIVE FROM:	<u>1/10/13</u>	

\*Please note the National Minimum Wage is currently £6.31 (age 21+), £5.03 (age 18-20) and £3.72 (age 16-17) effective from 1 October 2013.

As this form is only used to notify changes to my existing employees' details, any changes listed above relating to salary and/ or contractual hours will override any existing Statement of Particulars of Employment that has been agreed and signed between myself and my employee. This form will not replace the existing Statement of Particulars of Employment in its entirety only the changes detailed above.

DATE: 14/10/13 SIGNED: [Signature] (MEMBER)

DATE: 14/10/13 SIGNED: [Signature] (EMPLOYEE)

Further information from the Finance Office:

Any contractual changes in addition to those notified above will require the completion of a revised Statement of Particulars of Employment, which is available on the Finance pages on Assist or by contacting any member of the Pay Team. Any changes to personal details such as: home address; bank details or marital status can be notified in writing to the Pay Team directly by the employee.

Pay Team use only:

currently on £9656.40 / £6.19.  
going w2f 1/10 → £9843.60 / £6.31.

16/10





Northern Ireland Assembly  
Pay Team

\* employment due to  
end 10/1/14

00884

TR7

RM A

### SECRETARIAL SALARIES

#### AUTHORITY FOR DIRECT PAYMENT OF SECRETARIAL SALARIES

I, Basil McCrea, Member of Assembly for the Lagan Valley constituency, hereby authorise the Pay Team, Assembly Secretariat, to pay the person below, in his/her capacity as my Secretary/Research Assistant employed on Assembly business, the monthly gross sum (words) eight hundred and four pounds seventy pence £(digits) 804.70 until further notice, together with the appropriate contributions in respect of my liability for his/her employer for National Insurance contributions.

NB: The statutory minimum wage is £6.19 (age 21+), £4.98 (age 18-20) & £3.68 (under 18) from 1 October 2012

with effect from 15 July 2013 \*

Full-time/~~Part-time~~ (Delete as appropriate)

Hours worked per week 30

TITLE: ~~Mr/Mrs/Miss~~/Ms/Other

MARITAL STATUS: M/W/D(S)

SURNAME:

Murray

FORENAME(S):

Ashleigh

ADDRESS:

N. I. NUMBER:

DATE OF BIRTH:

NAME & ADDRESS OF BANK:

Nort Danske Bank

NAME(S) OF ACCOUNT HOLDER(S):

Ashleigh Murray

ACCOUNT NUMBER:

SORT CODE:

I understand the Pay Team will deduct Income Tax and National Insurance contributions from each payment for transmission to the appropriate authorities. Information on this form and in a pay file will be made available to Finance staff to manage Members' Office Cost Allowances.

**Please note this form will not be processed unless accompanied by a complete statement of particulars of employment and a job description.**

INCOME TAX P45/P46/P38(S) ATTACHED /TO FOLLOW (Delete as appropriate)

The employee (please indicate which statement applies)

☒ **Is not** a "connected person" as defined by the Northern Ireland Assembly members' Salaries, Allowances, Expenses and Pensions Determination 2012

☐ **Is a** connected person as defined by the Northern Ireland Assembly members' Salaries, Allowances, Expenses and Pensions Determination 2012

DATE: 08/07/13

SIGNED: X

(MEMBER)

DATE: 08/07/13

SIGNED: X

(EMPLOYEE)

Pay Team Use only:

£9656.40

£441.29 arrears (17 days July).

£804.70 August.

memo on for 10/1/14 - leaver.

16/8





TR8

## Job Description Form

Name Ashleigh Murray

Nature of Duty Constituent Officer

### Duties

#### Administrative Duties


Membership engagement via phone, mail and visits

Organising events where necessary

Support senior management team

Act as backup support for other administrative staff when on holidays

Alan Patterson to sign off weekly timesheets and to organise a backup where needed

  
Ashleigh Murray  
Staff Member

  
Basil McCrea MLA



TR 9

# Statement of particulars under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996

Date of issue:

From: (insert name of employer) MLA of (insert address of employer) Basil M'Crea MLK

To: (insert name of employee) of (insert address of employee) Ashleigh Murray



## 1. Introduction

This statement sets out the particulars of your employment with (insert name of employer) as at (insert date) which are required under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

## 2. Date of commencement of employment

Your employment commenced on (insert date) 15 July 2013

## 3. Continuity of Employment

N/A

No employment with a previous employer counts as part of a period of continuous employment. **or** Previous employment with (insert name of previous employer) forms part of a continuous period of employment which began on (insert date).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Delete whichever statement in relation to continuous employment within the brackets, which does not apply.



#### 4. Period of Employment

Your employment is ~~permanent~~ ~~or~~ Your employment is for a fixed term and expires on (insert date). ~~or~~ Your employment is temporary and is expected to expire on (insert date). However, circumstances may dictate an earlier or later termination.<sup>2</sup>

10<sup>th</sup> January 2014

#### 5. Job Title

The title of the job which you are employed to do is (insert job title). (The duties which this job entails are set out in the job description attached to this statement.)<sup>3</sup>

Constituent Officer

#### 6. Place of work

Your place of employment shall be (specify place of employment)

(and you may be required to work at the following addresses as necessary:-

.....Lisburn.....Constituent Office  
31-33 Bow Street  
Lisburn BT

You are not expected to be required to work outside the UK.<sup>5</sup>

#### 7. Remuneration

Your rate of pay is currently £6.19<sup>an Hour</sup> per (~~week or month or year~~) and thereafter as itemised on the pay slip, which you receive with your pay.

<sup>2</sup> Delete two of these statements and leave the statement which applies to the type of employment you are offering ie permanent/fixed/temporary.

<sup>3</sup> It is optional whether you include the job description provided that you have inserted the job title.

<sup>4</sup> You will only need to specify the addresses if this provision is relevant to you.

<sup>5</sup> If an employee is expected to work outside the UK, you should state this.



You will be paid monthly in arrears by BACS on the third working day prior to month end.

Where the employer (member) will be standing for re-election, payment will also continue during the period of dissolution of the NI Assembly under Section 31 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which occurs before an election. Where the employer is not standing for re-election, payment will continue only up to and including the date of dissolution of the Assembly, and during any subsequent notice period to which the employee is entitled under the contract of employment.

#### 8. Hours of work

Monday - Friday  
10 Am - 5 Pm

Your normal hours of work are from (time) to (time)(day of week) to (day of week)inclusive. A (one hour)(unpaid) break may be taken for lunch between (time) and (time). Your hours of duty may however be variable and will depend upon the employer's Assembly workload.

#### 9. Overtime<sup>6</sup>

N/A

You may be required to do a reasonable amount of overtime if and when the employer deems this to be necessary. This may include evening and weekend work.

You will be paid for such overtime at the rate of (insert hourly rate) **or** You will not usually receive payment for overtime but will receive equivalent time off in lieu which must be taken within one month at a time agreed with the employer). If however additional hours are worked and time off in lieu cannot be granted by the employer, you will be paid for such overtime at the rate of (insert hourly rate).

#### 10. Holidays

10 days

<sup>6</sup> You should state your position in relation to overtime by delete any of the provisions in paragraph 9 which you do not wish to agree to. The provision in relation to time off in lieu is a suggestion only.





In addition to the customary days, which are recognised by the employer, you are entitled to take *(insert number)*<sup>7</sup> working days as holidays in each holiday year which runs from *(insert date)* to *(insert date)* and you will be paid your normal basic remuneration during such holidays.

The employer recognises the following customary days;

New Year's Day, St Patrick's Day, Easter Monday, Easter Tuesday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday, July 12 and July 13, August Bank Holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.<sup>8</sup>

If your employment commenced or terminated part way through the holiday year, your entitlement to holidays during that year will be assessed on a pro rata basis. Deductions from final salary due to you on termination of employment will be made in respect of any holidays taken in excess of entitlement.

Holidays must be taken at times convenient to the employer. Sufficient notice of your intention to take holidays should be provided to *(insert name of person in organisation)*. Notice must be at least twice as long as the holiday period you require.

Holiday entitlement unused at the end of the holiday year cannot be carried over into the next holiday year unless you have not had the opportunity to exercise your right to paid annual leave due to being on sick leave. **or** A maximum number of (x) days unused holidays can be carried over at the end of the holiday year into the following year.<sup>9</sup>

You will not be entitled to be paid in respect of holidays accrued due but untaken as at the date of termination of employment. **or** You will be entitled to payment in lieu of holidays accrued but untaken as at the date of termination of employment.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The minimum paid leave entitlement is 5.6 weeks or 28 days (including customary days) based on the employees contracted hours. Part time or temporary workers are entitled to the same holidays on a pro rata basis as full time workers.

<sup>8</sup> Delete any of these Customary Days which you do not wish to recognise.

<sup>9</sup> You can choose which provision you prefer and delete the other provision.

<sup>10</sup> You can choose which provision you prefer and delete the other provision.



\* Periods of sickness should include a written letter.

\* Appointments for Doctors must have 1 week's notice to Office Manager

## 11. Sickness Absence<sup>11</sup>

If you are absent from work on account of sickness or injury, you or someone on your behalf should inform (employer) of the reason for your absence as soon as possible but no later than the end of the working day on which absence first occurs.

In respect of absence lasting less than 7 calendar days you need not produce a medical certificate unless you are specifically requested to do so. You must, however, complete a self-certification form immediately upon your return to work after such absence. These will be available from the employer.

In respect of absence lasting more than 7 calendar days you must in addition to providing a completed self-certification form, on the eighth calendar day of absence provide a medical certificate stating the reason for absence and thereafter provide a medical certificate each week to cover any subsequent period of absence.

The employer reserves the right to ask you at any stage of absence to produce a medical certificate and/or undergo a medical examination.

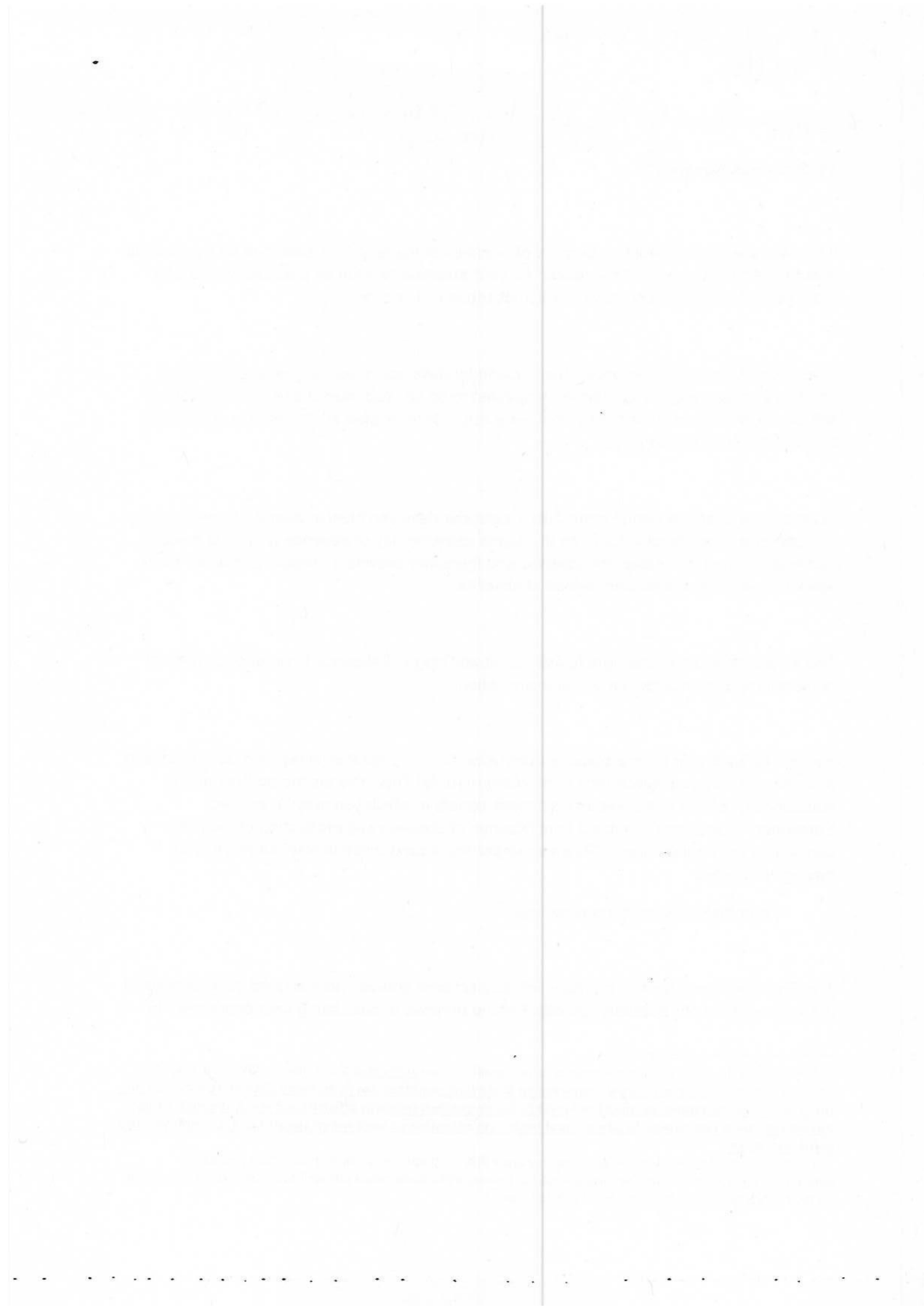
You will be paid your normal basic remuneration for ( ) number of working days in total in any one sick pay year which runs from (date) to (date). This includes the amount of any statutory sick pay or social security sickness benefit to which you may be entitled. Entitlement to payment is subject to notification of absence and production of medical certificates as required above. Payment under this arrangement is also subject to your having completed

( ) months/years continuous service.<sup>12</sup>

The Employer operates the statutory sick pay scheme and you are required to co-operate in the maintenance of necessary records. For the purpose of calculating your entitlement to

<sup>11</sup> The clauses set out in the sub-paragraphs of paragraph 2.5 are suggested terms and conditions in respect of sickness absence. There is no legal requirement to pay an employee anything more than statutory sick pay (provided that the employee qualifies for SSP) for days when he/she is absent from work through illness but an employer can choose to pay normal basic remuneration or such other amount as the employer and employee agree.

<sup>12</sup> You may or may not wish to include a requirement that the employee completes a certain period of continuous service before they become entitled to normal basic remuneration during illness. If you do not wish to include this requirement you can delete this last line.



statutory sick pay, qualifying days are those days on which you are normally required to work. Payments made to you by (*employer*) under its sick pay provisions in satisfaction of any other contractual entitlement will go towards discharging (employers) liability to make payment to you under the statutory sick pay scheme.

## **12. Statutory Leave and Pay**

Your entitlement to Maternity leave and pay; Paternity leave and pay; Adoption leave and pay; and Parental leave will be in line with statutory provisions, which are currently in force in Northern Ireland.

## **13. Pension<sup>13</sup>**

The employer currently does not operate a pension scheme but will contribute an amount equal to (*insert percentage amount up to 10 percent*) of your annual salary to a personal pension scheme which you have set up provided that you have a valid agreement in place with a pension provider in relation to that scheme. You are required to provide the employer with a copy of the terms and conditions in relation to the pension scheme. Payment of the pension contribution by the employer is subject to the condition that there is an agreement by your pension provider to receive direct payment from your employer into your pension scheme.

As the employer does not offer a pension scheme, there is no contracting out certificate in respect of a pension in force.

The employer reserves the right to amend the terms of your employment in relation to pension provision.

**or**

An occupational pension scheme/ stakeholders scheme/ non-contributory pension scheme is provided and you are entitled to membership of that scheme. Full particulars of that scheme are set out in a booklet which (has been or will be) given to you

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<sup>13</sup> You are not legally obliged to operate a pension scheme or contribute to a pension scheme but you must confirm the position in the Statement. If you wish to contribute to the employee's personal pension scheme then it is suggested that you insert the first three paragraphs and delete the last three paragraphs. If you choose to operate your own pension scheme then you can insert the last three paragraphs and delete the first three paragraphs. You may wish to take pensions advice from an expert before deciding on whether to offer employees a pension.



There (is/ is not) a contracting out certificate in force for this scheme.<sup>14</sup>

The employer reserves the right to amend the terms of your employment in relation to pension provision.

#### **14. Notice of termination of employment**

The length of notice which you are obliged to give the employer to terminate your employment is one week.<sup>15</sup>

The length of notice which you are entitled to receive from the employer to terminate your employment is one week until you have been continuously employed for 2 years and thereafter notice entitlement increases by one week for each year of continuous employment until you have completed 12 years of continuous employment after which time you will be entitled to 13 weeks notice.

#### **15. Collective agreements**

No collective agreement directly affects the terms and conditions of your employment.

#### **16. Grievance procedure**

If you have a grievance regarding your employment you should in the first instance speak to (state person eg. a supervisor or the employer). If the grievance is not then resolved, you should refer to the grievance procedure which (may be obtained on application to the employer/ is attached to this Statement)<sup>16</sup>. **In accordance with the grievance procedure**

---

<sup>14</sup> If the employer provides an occupational pension scheme or a stakeholders scheme or any other form of pension scheme, the employer should check with the pension provider whether there is a contracting out certificate in force in respect of the pension and confirm this in the Written Statement of Employment Particulars. If the employer does not offer a pension scheme the employer should state that "As the employer does not offer a pension scheme, there is no contracting out certificate in respect of a pension in force."

<sup>15</sup> One week is the minimum statutory period of notice an employee must give an employer to terminate employment. However, the employer may consider that a longer period of notice is required. If the employer seeks a longer period of notice (eg one month or longer provided this is reasonable) the employer should insert this in the Statement instead of the one week period.

<sup>16</sup> Delete accordingly.





***you should apply in writing to (Insert Name) if you have a grievance regarding your employment.***

#### **16. Disciplinary rules and procedures**

The disciplinary rules and procedures applicable to you are attached to this statement. If you are dissatisfied with any disciplinary decision taken in relation to you, you have a right to request an appeal to *(state person)*. You must do so in writing within 5 days of receiving notification of the decision.



Please acknowledge receipt of and agreement to the terms of this statement by completing the tear-off slip below and returning to (state to whom the slip should be returned)

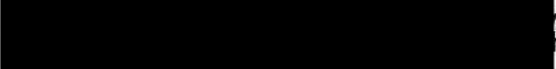
X



signature of MLA

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**Acknowledgement and Agreement to Statement of Particulars of Employment**

I, ( *Ashleigh Murray* ) of (  ) hereby acknowledge that I have received and agree with the terms of a statement of the particulars of my employment as required by the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

Signed: X

*Ashleigh Murray*

Dated: 8/7/13



**JAMIE MACKRELL - [REDACTED]**  
**EMPLOYED - 1/6/2011 - 17/5/2013**

**PAYMENT HISTORY**

Payment date	Gross	Net
28/06/2011	£485.33	£388.33
27/07/2011	£485.33	£582.33*
26/08/2011	£485.33	£485.33
28/09/2011	£485.33	£485.33
27/10/2011	£485.33	£485.33
28/11/2011	£485.33	£485.33
21/12/2011	£485.33	£485.33
27/01/2012	£485.33	£485.33
27/02/2012	£485.33	£485.33
28/03/2012	£485.33	£485.33
26/04/2013	£485.33	£485.33
29/05/2013	£485.33	£485.33
27/06/2013	£485.33	£485.33
27/7/2012	£485.33	£485.33
29/08/2012	£1945.14	£1704.25**
26/09/2012	£1227.20	£1045.62
29/10/2012	£1227.20	£1045.82
28/11/2012	£1227.20	£1045.82
19/12/2012	£1227.20	£1045.62
28/01/2013	£1227.20	£1045.82
26/02/2013	£1227.20	£1045.62
26/03/2013	£1227.20	£1045.82
26/04/2013	£1227.20	£1069.66
29/05/2013	£672.98	£692.54

\* Indicates a tax refund

\*\* Pay and hrs increase wef 2/7/2012. Now on £1227.20 pm. Paid in August so arrears for July included.

[REDACTED] 15/10/14.



10 MFS

14/8



TR 11

Northern Ireland Assembly  
Pay Team

# AMENDED SECRETARIAL SALARIES AND EMPLOYEE DETAILS

## AUTHORITY FOR DIRECT PAYMENT OF SECRETARIAL SALARIES

I, BASIL McCREA, Member of Assembly for the LAGAN JAMES constituency, hereby authorise the Pay Team, Northern Ireland Assembly, to amend the existing contractual details of the under mentioned employee who is employed on Assembly business under my Office Cost Allowance.

Employee name:

JAMIE MAUREN

Employee Payroll no (if known):

Reason for change to existing contractual terms:

CHANGE IN EMPLOYEE'S CONTRACT FROM

PART-TIME TO FULL-TIME

PLEASE COMPLETE BELOW IF ANY CONTRACTUAL DETAILS HAVE CHANGED

*SALARY DETAILS REVISED TO:	£ 1227.20	Monthly/ <del>Annual</del> (Delete as appropriate)
CONTRACTUAL HOURS REVISED TO:	40	
ANNUAL LEAVE REVISED TO:		
CHANGES EFFECTIVE FROM:	02/07/12	

\*Please note the National Minimum Wage is currently £6.08 (age 21+), £4.98 (age 18-20) and £3.68 (age 16-17) effective from 1 October 2011.

As this form is only used to notify changes to my existing employees' details, any changes listed above relating to salary and/ or contractual hours will override any existing Statement of Particulars of Employment that has been agreed and signed between myself and my employee. This form will not replace the existing Statement of Particulars of Employment in its entirety only the changes detailed above.

DATE: 08/08/12 SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ (MEMBER)

DATE: 08/08/12 SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ (EMPLOYEE)

Further information from the Finance Office: ☒

Any contractual changes in addition to those notified above will require the completion of a revised Statement of Particulars of Employment, which is available on the Finance pages on Assist or by contacting any member of the Pay Team. Any changes to personal details such as: home address; bank details or marital status can be notified in writing to the Pay Team directly by the employee.

Pay Team use only:

$£1227.20 \text{ pm} \times 12 = 14726.40$

EF 2/7.

$1/7 = \frac{485.33}{31} = 15.66$

$15.66 \times 30 = 469.80$

14/8/12

NI ASSEMBLY

13 AUG 2012

PAY TEAM

Rec'd £485.33.

Due diff of £717.94

1227.20

1945.14

Form A (1)

October 2011

TOTAL = £1703.27







Northern Ireland Assembly  
Pay Team

## SECRETARIAL SALARIES

### AUTHORITY FOR DIRECT PAYMENT OF SECRETARIAL SALARIES

I, BASEL MCCREA, Member of Assembly for the LACAN VALLEY constituency, hereby authorise the Pay Team, Assembly Secretariat, to pay the person below, in his/her capacity as my Secretary/Research Assistant employed on Assembly business, the monthly gross sum (words) Four hundred and eighty five Pounds and £(digits) 485.33 until further notice, together with the appropriate contributions in respect of my liability for his/her employer for National Insurance contributions. THIRTY THREE PENCE

NB: The statutory minimum wage is £5.93 (age 22+), £4.92 (age 18-21) & £3.64 (under 18) from 1 October 2010

with effect from 01/06/11

~~Full-time~~/Part-time (Delete as appropriate)

Hours worked per week 16

TITLE: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS: ~~M/W/D/S~~

SURNAME: MACKRELL

FORENAME(S): JANIE

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

N. I. NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME & ADDRESS OF BANK: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) OF ACCOUNT HOLDER(S): MR J. MACKRELL

ACCOUNT NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ SORT CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand the Pay Team will deduct Income Tax and National Insurance contributions from each payment for transmission to the appropriate authorities. Information on this form and in a pay file will be made available to Finance staff to manage Members' Office Cost Allowances.

INCOME TAX P45/P46/P38(S) ATTACHED /TO FOLLOW (Delete as appropriate)

DATE: 01/06/11

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

(MEMBER)

DATE: 01/06/11

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

(EMPLOYEE)

Pay Team Use only:

Karen Tabaka completing  
SOP's + will send P46-  
20/6

NI ASSEMBLY

18 JUN 2011

PAY TEAM



Job Description – Jamie Mackrell

Job Title – Member Support

Hours of work: Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm

Place of work: Stormont Office, Lisburn Constituency Office and Dromore Constituency Office (as required)

Duties: -Liaise with constituents and community groups.

- Deal with constituents' queries

- Liaise with local press outlets

- Write press releases and take photographs

- Research various topics

- Monitor news outlets for newsworthy stories

- Update facebook and twitter feeds

- Any other duties as required



# Statement of particulars under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996

Date of issue: 01/06/11

From: (insert name of employer) MLA of (insert address of employer) Basil McCrea, [REDACTED]  
Parliament Buildings

To: (insert name of employee) of (insert address of employee) James MacNeill, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## 1. Introduction

This statement sets out the particulars of your employment with (insert name of employer) as at (insert date) which are required under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

## 2. Date of commencement of employment

Your employment commenced on (insert date)

01/06/11

## 3. Continuity of Employment

No employment with a previous employer counts as part of a period of continuous employment. or ~~Previous employment with (insert name of previous employer) forms part of a continuous period of employment which began on (insert date).<sup>1</sup>~~

<sup>1</sup> Delete whichever statement in relation to continuous employment within the brackets, which does not apply.



#### 4. Period of Employment

Your employment is permanent. ~~or Your employment is for a fixed term and expires on (insert date).~~ ~~or Your employment is temporary and is expected to expire on (insert date).~~ However, circumstances may dictate an earlier or later termination.<sup>2</sup>

#### 5. Job Title

MLA Support



The title of the job which you are employed to do is (insert job title). (The duties which this job entails are set out in the job description attached to this statement.)<sup>3</sup>

#### 6. Place of work

Parliament Buildings

Your place of employment shall be (specify place of employment)

(and you may be required to work at the following addresses as necessary:-  
.....)<sup>4</sup>

   
You are not expected to be required to work outside the UK.<sup>5</sup>

#### 7. Remuneration

Your rate of pay is currently £112 per (week or ~~month or year~~) and thereafter as itemised on the pay slip, which you receive with your pay.

<sup>2</sup> Delete two of these statements and leave the statement which applies to the type of employment you are offering ie permanent/fixed/temporary.

<sup>3</sup> It is optional whether you include the job description provided that you have inserted the job title.

<sup>4</sup> You will only need to specify the addresses if this provision is relevant to you.

<sup>5</sup> If an employee is expected to work outside the UK, you should state this.





BACS

You will be paid (state method of payment) at (~~weekly or~~ monthly) intervals on the (insert day) day of each (~~week or~~ month).

Where the employer (member) will be standing for re-election, payment will also continue during the period of dissolution of the NI Assembly under Section 31 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which occurs before an election. Where the employer is not standing for re-election, payment will continue only up to and including the date of dissolution of the Assembly, and during any subsequent notice period to which the employee is entitled under the contract of employment.

## 8. Hours of work

10 AM 2 PM Monday Thursday

Your normal hours of work are from (time) to (time)(day of week) to (day of week)inclusive. A (~~one hour(unpaid)~~ break may be taken for lunch between (~~time~~) and (~~time~~). Your hours of duty may however be variable and will depend upon the employer's Assembly workload.

## 9. Overtime<sup>6</sup>

You may be required to do a reasonable amount of overtime if and when the employer deems this to be necessary. This may include evening and weekend work.

~~You will be paid for such overtime at the rate of (insert hourly rate) or~~ You will not usually receive payment for overtime but will receive equivalent time off in lieu which must be taken within one month at a time agreed with the employer). If however additional hours are worked and time off in lieu cannot be granted by the employer, you will be paid for such overtime at the rate of (insert hourly rate).

## 10. Holidays

---

<sup>6</sup> You should state your position in relation to overtime by delete any of the provisions in paragraph 9 which you do not wish to agree to. The provision in relation to time off in lieu is a suggestion only.



In addition to the customary days, which are recognised by the employer, you are entitled to take *(insert number)* working days as holidays in each holiday year which runs from *(insert date)* to *(insert date)* and you will be paid your normal basic remuneration during such holidays.

The employer recognises the following customary days;

New Year's Day, St Patrick's Day, Easter Monday, Easter Tuesday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday, July 12 and July 13, August Bank Holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.<sup>8</sup>

If your employment commenced or terminated part way through the holiday year, your entitlement to holidays during that year will be assessed on a pro rata basis. Deductions from final salary due to you on termination of employment will be made in respect of any holidays taken in excess of entitlement.

Holidays must be taken at times convenient to the employer. Sufficient notice of your intention to take holidays should be provided to *(insert name of person in organisation)*. Notice must be at least twice as long as the holiday period you require.

Holiday entitlement unused at the end of the holiday year cannot be carried over into the next holiday year unless you have not had the opportunity to exercise your right to paid annual leave due to being on sick leave. ~~or A maximum number of (x) days unused holidays can be carried over at the end of the holiday year into the following year.~~<sup>9</sup>

You will not be entitled to be paid in respect of holidays accrued due but untaken as at the date of termination of employment. ~~or You will be entitled to payment in lieu of holidays accrued but untaken as at the date of termination of employment.~~<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> The minimum paid leave entitlement is 5.6 weeks or 28 days (including customary days) based on the employees contracted hours. Part time or temporary workers are entitled to the same holidays on a pro rata basis as full time workers.

<sup>9</sup> Delete any of these Customary Days which you do not wish to recognise.

<sup>10</sup> You can choose which provision you prefer and delete the other provision.

<sup>10</sup> You can choose which provision you prefer and delete the other provision.



## 11. Sickness Absence<sup>11</sup>

If you are absent from work on account of sickness or injury, you or someone on your behalf should inform (employer) of the reason for your absence as soon as possible but no later than the end of the working day on which absence first occurs.

In respect of absence lasting less than 7 calendar days you need not produce a medical certificate unless you are specifically requested to do so. You must, however, complete a self-certification form immediately upon your return to work after such absence. These will be available from the employer.

In respect of absence lasting more than 7 calendar days you must in addition to providing a completed self-certification form, on the eighth calendar day of absence provide a medical certificate stating the reason for absence and thereafter provide a medical certificate each week to cover any subsequent period of absence.

The employer reserves the right to ask you at any stage of absence to produce a medical certificate and/or undergo a medical examination.

You will be paid your normal basic remuneration for ( **7** ) number of working days in total in any one sick pay year which runs from (date) to (date). This includes the amount of any statutory sick pay or social security sickness benefit to which you may be entitled. Entitlement to payment is subject to notification of absence and production of medical certificates as required above. Payment under this arrangement is also subject to your having completed

(        ) months/years continuous service.<sup>12</sup>

The *Employer* operates the statutory sick pay scheme and you are required to co-operate in the maintenance of necessary records. For the purpose of calculating your entitlement to

---

<sup>11</sup> The clauses set out in the sub-paragraphs of paragraph 2.5 are **suggested** terms and conditions in respect of sickness absence. **There is no legal requirement to pay an employee anything more than statutory sick pay (provided that the employee qualifies for SSP) for days when he/she is absent from work through illness but an employer can choose to pay normal basic remuneration or such other amount as the employer and employee agree.**

<sup>12</sup> You may or may not wish to include a requirement that the employee completes a certain period of continuous service before they become entitled to normal basic remuneration during illness. If you do not wish to include this requirement you can delete this last line.



statutory sick pay, qualifying days are those days on which you are normally required to work. Payments made to you by (*employer*) under its sick pay provisions in satisfaction of any other contractual entitlement will go towards discharging (employers) liability to make payment to you under the statutory sick pay scheme.

## **12. Statutory Leave and Pay**

Your entitlement to Maternity leave and pay; Paternity leave and pay; Adoption leave and pay; and Parental leave will be in line with statutory provisions, which are currently in force in Northern Ireland.

## **13. Pension<sup>13</sup>**

The employer currently does not operate a pension scheme but will contribute an amount equal to (*insert percentage amount up to 10 percent*) of your annual salary to a personal pension scheme which you have set up provided that you have a valid agreement in place with a pension provider in relation to that scheme. You are required to provide the employer with a copy of the terms and conditions in relation to the pension scheme. Payment of the pension contribution by the employer is subject to the condition that there is an agreement by your pension provider to receive direct payment from your employer into your pension scheme.

As the employer does not offer a pension scheme, there is no contracting out certificate in respect of a pension in force.

The employer reserves the right to amend the terms of your employment in relation to pension provision.

**or**

An occupational pension scheme/ stakeholders scheme/ non-contributory pension scheme is provided and you are entitled to membership of that scheme. Full particulars of that scheme are set out in a booklet which (has been or will be) given to you

---

<sup>13</sup> You are not legally obliged to operate a pension scheme or contribute to a pension scheme but you must confirm the position in the Statement. If you wish to contribute to the employee's personal pension scheme then it is suggested that you insert the first three paragraphs and delete the last three paragraphs. If you choose to operate your own pension scheme then you can insert the last three paragraphs and delete the first three paragraphs. You may wish to take pensions advice from an expert before deciding on whether to offer employees a pension.





There (is/ is not) a contracting out certificate in force for this scheme.<sup>14</sup>

The employer reserves the right to amend the terms of your employment in relation to pension provision.

#### **14. Notice of termination of employment**

The length of notice which you are obliged to give the employer to terminate your employment is one week.<sup>15</sup>

The length of notice which you are entitled to receive from the employer to terminate your employment is one week until you have been continuously employed for 2 years and thereafter notice entitlement increases by one week for each year of continuous employment until you have completed 12 years of continuous employment after which time you will be entitled to 13 weeks notice.

#### **15. Collective agreements**

No collective agreement directly affects the terms and conditions of your employment.

#### **16. Grievance procedure**

If you have a grievance regarding your employment you should in the first instance speak to (state person eg. a supervisor or the employer). If the grievance is not then resolved, you should refer to the grievance procedure which (may be obtained on application to the employer/ is attached to this Statement)<sup>16</sup>. **In accordance with the grievance procedure**

---

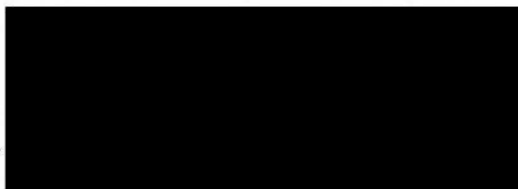
<sup>14</sup> If the employer provides an occupational pension scheme or a stakeholders scheme or any other form of pension scheme, the employer should check with the pension provider whether there is a contracting out certificate in force in respect of the pension and confirm this in the Written Statement of Employment Particulars. If the employer does not offer a pension scheme the employer should state that "As the employer does not offer a pension scheme, there is no contracting out certificate in respect of a pension in force."

<sup>15</sup> One week is the minimum statutory period of notice an employee must give an employer to terminate employment. However, the employer may consider that a longer period of notice is required. If the employer seeks a longer period of notice (eg one month or longer provided this is reasonable) the employer should insert this in the Statement instead of the one week period.

<sup>16</sup> Delete accordingly.




Please acknowledge receipt of and agreement to the terms of this statement by completing the tear-off slip below and returning to (state to whom the slip should be returned)



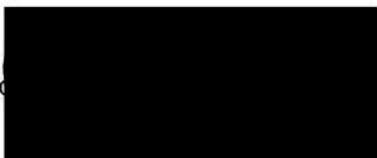
signature of ~~MLA~~

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**Acknowledgement and Agreement to Statement of Particulars of Employment**

I, ( *James McKeown* ) of (  ) hereby acknowledge that I have received and agree with the terms of a statement of the particulars of my employment as required by the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

Signed



Dated:

*01/06/11*



Annex A

Statement of change in terms of employment under the Employment Rights  
(Northern Ireland) Order 1996

From: (employer) of (address) Janet Maxwell, [REDACTED]  
To: (employee) of (address) BUSIL McCREA, Room [REDACTED] Assessment  
Directorates.

1. Introduction

This statement is provided to notify you of the following changes with effect from  
(date) in the terms of your employment as set out in the statement of particulars of  
employment with (employer) given to you on (date).

2. Changes in terms of employment

2.1

Please acknowledge receipt of this statement by completing the tear-off slip  
below and returning it by (date) to (state to whom the slip should be returned).

[REDACTED] (Signature of employer)

I, Janet Maxwell acknowledge that I have received and agree with  
the terms of a statement of alterations in the terms of my employment.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Dated: ~~21/06/11~~ 01/06/11



DB 1

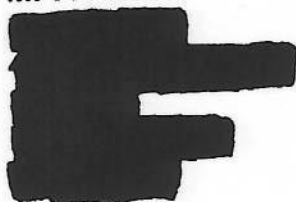
**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 9052 1211

Email: standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk

**Mr A Patterson**



**18 July 2014**

Dear Mr Patterson,

**YOUR COMPLAINT AGAINST BASIL MCCREA MLA**

I have now had an opportunity of considering your complaint against Mr McCrea sent under cover of your email of 17 July 2014.

As you will know I am required to consider all complaints in accordance with the provisions of the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act 2011 (General Procedures) Direction 2012. Paragraph 3.1 of that Direction provides that I may investigate a complaint only where the complaint is admissible. Paragraph 3.2 provides that an admissible complaint must fulfil the eight criteria there set out. Having considered your complaint against these criteria I am not, at present, satisfied that it is admissible.

Your complaint, as I read it, alleges acts or omissions of Mr McCrea which you assert were in breach of the provisions of the Code of Conduct relating to three areas, namely -

- (a) treatment of staff;
- (b) treatment of Ashleigh Murray; and
- (c) treatment of you.





## ASSEMBLY - RESTRICTED

However, although you have identified these areas you have not provided sufficient specification regarding the acts or omissions on which you found your complaint. Nor, other than in relation to incidents you witnessed, have you provided any supporting evidence to establish a prima facie case that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred. As I am sure you understand the Code applies only to the conduct of Members whilst they are acting in that capacity: it does not cover their acts or omissions in other circumstances. I cannot consider any complaint that relates to conduct that is beyond the scope of the Code. It is, accordingly, important that you explain the basis on which you assert that at the relevant times Mr McCrea was acting as a Member.

In your complaint you assert that Mr McCrea breached the following provisions of the Code of Conduct –

- (a) the public duty, integrity, openness, honesty, leadership, equality, good relations and respect principles; and
- (b) the rule of the Code which provides that *'Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner which will tend to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Assembly and never undertake any action which would bring the Assembly into disrepute.'*

You have not, however, set out which of these provisions you believe was breached by each of the alleged acts or omissions set out in your complaint.

Accordingly, pursuant to paragraph 3.4 of the General Procedures Direction, I require you to provide me with the following information –

- 1. In relation to the allegations relating to the treatment of staff –
  - (a) details (e.g. date, time, place, persons involved, what occurred) in relation to each act or omission of Mr McCrea that you assert was in breach of the Code of Conduct;
  - (b) in relation to each such alleged act or omission (other than any which you saw or heard), enough supporting evidence to establish a prima facie case that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred;
  - (c) in relation to each such alleged act or omission the particular part or parts of the Code you assert have been breached; and
  - (d) in relation to each such act or omission the basis on which you assert that at the relevant time Mr McCrea was acting in his capacity as an MLA rather than as the Leader of NI21 or in some other capacity.
- 2. In relation to the allegations relating to treatment of Ashleigh Murray –
  - (a) details (e.g. date, time, place, persons involved, what occurred) in relation to each act or omission of Mr McCrea that you assert was in breach of the Code of Conduct;

ASSEMBLY - RESTRICTED



- (b) in relation to each such alleged act or omission (other than any which you saw or heard), enough supporting evidence to establish a prime facie case that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred;
  - (c) in relation to each such alleged act or omission the particular part or parts of the Code you assert have been breached; and
  - (d) in relation to each such act or omission the basis on which you assert that at the relevant time Mr McCrea was acting in his capacity as an MLA rather than as the Leader of NI21 or in some other capacity.
3. In relation to the allegations relating to your treatment –
- (a) details (e.g. date, time, place, persons involved, what occurred) in relation to each act or omission of Mr McCrea that you assert was in breach of the Code of Conduct;
  - (b) in relation to each such alleged act or omission (other than any which you saw or heard), enough supporting evidence to establish a prime facie case that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred;
  - (c) in relation to each such alleged act or omission the particular part or parts of the Code you assert have been breached; and
  - (d) in relation to each such act or omission the basis on which you assert that at the relevant time Mr McCrea was acting in his capacity as an MLA rather than as the Leader of NI21 or in some other capacity.

Paragraph 3.5 of the General Procedures Direction provides that if, within 21 days of this notice, you fail to provide me with sufficient additional information to render your complaint admissible, then the complaint, or in this case the appropriate part of it, is not admissible and will not be investigated. Please note that I have no discretion in this matter and no power to extend the period allowed for your response.

On receipt of your response I will determine the admissibility of your complaint. Any parts of it that I decide are admissible will be investigated thoroughly. It is likely that I will require to meet with you at an early stage of any investigation.

Any investigation will be carried out broadly in line with the note sent to you under cover of my letter of 17 July. I would, in particular, draw your attention to that part of



the note dealing with section 33 of the 2012 Act. That provision makes it unlawful for you to disclose any information contained in your complaint or any information you receive from me either in this letter or otherwise.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**



**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 9052 1211

Email: standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk

**Holmes and Moffitt  
Solicitors  
218 Knock Road  
BELFAST  
BT5 6QD**

**Your Ref: SL/JT/Murray**

**11 August 2014**

Dear Sirs

**YOUR CLIENT – ASHLEIGH MURRAY  
COMPLAINT AGAINST BASIL MCCREA MLA**

Thank you for your letter of 7 August 2014 covering a complaint against Basil McCrea MLA by your client Ashleigh Murray. I will consider the complaint broadly in accordance with the procedures and statutory provisions set out in the enclosed note.

I have now had an opportunity of considering the complaint and would advise you that it does not, at present, meet the admissibility criteria set out in paragraph 3.2 of the General Procedures Direction.

In accordance with paragraph 3.4 of that Direction I require your client to provide me with the following additional information:

- (a) the part or parts of the Code of Conduct which she alleges have been breached; and
- (b) in relation to any acts or omissions of Mr McCrea that are alleged to have breached the Code and which were not witnessed by your client, enough supporting evidence to establish a prima facie case that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred.





If within 21 days from the date of this letter I have not received that information, your client's complaint will not be admissible and will not be investigated.

Yours faithfully

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**Enc**



Date started Date left

**Basil McCrea**

Karen Tabahe	16/11/2009	Still employed
Jamie Mackrell	01/06/2011	17/05/2013
Fiona McAateer	16/01/2012	30/06/2013

Jacqueline Neglia	24/06/2013	05/06/2014
-------------------	------------	------------

Ashleigh Murray	15/07/2013	01/11/2013
Kirsty McClay	12/08/2013	Still employed

**John McCallister**

Kathy Wilson	05/09/2011	Still employed
Annette Holden	09/07/2007	Still employed

Peter Hutchinson	04/09/2014	Still employed
------------------	------------	----------------

**NI21 Party**

Fiona McAateer	01/07/2013	17/09/2014
Peter Hutchison	08/07/2013	03/09/2014
Nigel Macauley	13/01/2014	31/05/2014



## Hansard

This document was redacted by the Committee.

DB 4A

10<sup>th</sup> September 2014

Sir Douglas Bain CBE TD  
Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283, Parliament Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Dear Sir

**Re: Basil McCrea MLA**

I understand that a complaint has been made to you in respect of Mr McCrea MLA. I believe that contained within the complaint there is reference to my employment with Mr McCrea in the context of bullying and harassment.

I would ask you to note that I do not wish for any complaint to be taken forward by you in respect of my employment with Mr McCrea. Any employment issues that I had have been dealt with in the normal channels and in accordance with the procedures in place and resolved to my satisfaction.

I would be grateful if you would kindly acknowledge safe receipt.

Yours faithfully

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Karen Tabahe.

Karen Tabahe



## Internet Information – Ashley Murray (Princes Trust)

This document was redacted by the Committee.



DB 6

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# MARRIAGE EQUALITY

# anphoblacht

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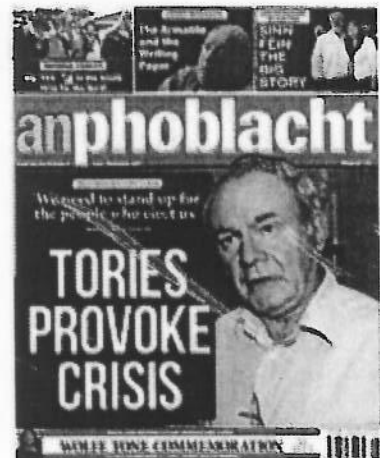
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18 June 2013

## Sinn Féin Summer School –

[REDACTED] Basil McCrea,  
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Resize: AA Print

12

# MARRIAGE EQUALITY

## and

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**4th ANNUAL SINN FÉIN**

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

**JUNE 28th – 29th**



**MILLS INN, BAILE MHIRNE**

POLITICS, ARTS, SPORTS, MEDIA, CULTURE.

**BASIL MCCREA MLA, LEADER OF IRELAND NEWEST PARTY NI21.**

**Scoil Shamhraidh na Saoirse**



## Opening by [REDACTED] TD – Special guest speaker

THERE'S BOUND to be fireworks at the 4th Annual Sinn Féin Summer School in County Cork at the end of this month with controversial and outspoken commentators such as [REDACTED], *Guardian* columnist [REDACTED], *Irish Independent* columnist [REDACTED], GAA star [REDACTED] and 2012 Young Person of the Year and disability rights campaigner [REDACTED] taking part.

Basil McCrea MLA (right), leader of the new pro-Union NI21 party, will go head-to-head in a debate with Sinn Féin deputy leader [REDACTED] TD on 'Is it time for a Border Poll on Irish unity as provided for in the Good Friday Agreement?'

[REDACTED], the Cork hurling and football star of Irish and Fijian heritage, will be the keynote speaker on 'Culture, language and identity'.

[REDACTED] – regular commentator on RTÉ's *Drivetime* and *Newstalk* after attending the Leveson judicial public inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press following the News International phone hacking scandal – will be the key speaker on 'Media ownership – does it matter?'

Emigration and its effects on society are covered in the session 'Emigration – 90 years of complacency?' with speakers [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] from University College Cork and [REDACTED], Senior Research and Policy Officer with the National Youth Council of Ireland.

[REDACTED] from Early Childhood Creativity will speak on 'Why creativity in education matters'.

Movie historian [REDACTED] – School of Drama, Film & Music at Trinity College Dublin and author, co-author or editor of numerous books, including *Cinema and Ireland* (1987) – will give his take on 'Irish historical films made during the 1910s'.

'Subversive artist' and Phantom 1052 [REDACTED] is sure to stimulate the imagination speaking on 'The role that art can play in bringing about social and political change'. [REDACTED] has made headlines by placing 100 fake 'landmines' made from stenciled enamel plates in five parks around Dublin to bring home what other people have to live with every day. Another was the 'Bertie Cash Giveaway' at the Molly Malone statue in Grafton Street.

Book by contacting [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]



**4th Annual Sinn Féin Summer School**  
**Mills Inn, Baile Mhuirne, Co Cork**



## Friday & Saturday, 28 & 29 June

### Friday from 6:30pm

Opening: [REDACTED] TD

Special guest speaker: [REDACTED]

Disability and identity – [REDACTED]

Culture, language and identity – [REDACTED] (Cork hurling and football GAA star of Irish and Fijian heritage)

### Saturday 11am

'Is it time for a border poll on Irish Unity as provided for in the GFA?' [REDACTED] TD (Sinn Féin) and Basil McCrea MLA (NI21)

1pm to 2pm Lunch break

### Saturday 2pm

'Irish historical films made during the 1910s' – [REDACTED] School of Drama, Film & Music, Trinity College Dublin

'Why creativity in education matters' – [REDACTED] from Early Childhood Creativity'

'The role that art can play in bringing about social and political change' – artist [REDACTED]

### Saturday 3:30pm

'Emigration– 90 years of complacency?' – [REDACTED] from UCC, and [REDACTED], Senior Research and Policy Officer with NYC

### Saturday 4:30pm

'Media ownership – does it matter?' – *Guardian* columnist and Professor of Journalism at London City University [REDACTED], and *Irish Independent* columnist [REDACTED]

### Saturday 6:30pm

Closing Address: [REDACTED]

## Uncomfortable Conversations

An initiative for dialogue  
for reconciliation

Contributions from key figures in the churches, academia and wider civic society as well as senior republican figures







# Office Cost Expenditure Report - 2012 - 2013

Report Date:

24 October 2014

NI Assembly Member

101015

McCrea, Basil

Committed Expenditure

Allowance April 2012 to March 2013 £ 73,583.00

Members Support Staff - Basic

£ -

Members Support Staff - ERNI

£ -

Members Office - Rent

£ -

Members Office - Service Charges

£ -

Members Office - Rates

£ -

Members Room Hire

£ -

Members Website

£ -

Members Office Equipment Leasing

£ -

Members Serviced Office Costs

£ -

Outstanding Resource Costs

£ -

Total Committed Expend.

£ -

Actual Expenditure £ 73,580.43

Balance/Overspend £2.57

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
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03-Apr-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Apr 12	£300.00
03-Apr-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	34 Hillsborough Rd, Lisburn - Apr - Jun 12	£3,300.00
04-Apr-12	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£0.77
20-Apr-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Apr 12	£480.49
20-Apr-12	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£5.43
20-Apr-12	Members Consumables	44200	Poundland - Office Supplies	£4.00
20-Apr-12	Members Postage Cost	44210	Apr 12	£3.30
23-Apr-12	Members Office - Rates	43700	34 Hillsborough Rd, Lisburn - Apr 12 - Mar 13	£2,617.40
23-Apr-12	Members Office - Rates	43700	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Apr 12 - Mar 13	£1,515.38
23-Apr-12	Members Office - Utilities	43800	Apr 12 - Mar 13	£229.17
23-Apr-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Jan - Apr 12	£145.11
23-Apr-12	Members Telephones	43820	Apr 12	£85.26
23-Apr-12	Members Telephones	43820	Apr 12	£22.20
23-Apr-12	Members Internet	43825	Apr 12	£30.00
26-Apr-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries April 2012	£3,090.53
26-Apr-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries April 2012	£101.18
02-May-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - May 12	£300.00
09-May-12	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - May 12	£230.80
09-May-12	Members Mobiles	43830	02 - Apr 12	£58.48
10-May-12	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Dixons - iPad	£562.14

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
10-May-12	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Dixons - SD Card	£19.95
10-May-12	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Dixons - iPad Case	£31.79
10-May-12	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	Dixons - Cloud Backup	£50.00
10-May-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - May 12	£151.16
10-May-12	Members Office Equipment - Non Capital	44000	Dixons - Digital Camera	£93.97
11-May-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Lodgement 282457	-£300.00
17-May-12	Members Telephones	43820	May 12	£85.39
17-May-12	Members Internet	43825	May 12	£30.00
17-May-12	Members Internet	43825	May 12	£200.38
21-May-12	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Fire Extinguishers	£36.00
21-May-12	Members Telephones	43820	May 12	£22.20
29-May-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries May 2012	£3,090.53
29-May-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries May 2012	£101.18
01-Jun-12	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Fire Extinguishers	£58.80
01-Jun-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jun 12	£300.00
01-Jun-12	Members Internet	43825	Jun 12	£30.00
01-Jun-12	Members Mobiles	43830	O2 - May 12	£58.22
01-Jun-12	Members Consumables	44200	Poundland - Office Supplies	£1.00
01-Jun-12	Members Postage Cost	44210	May 12	£0.87
14-Jun-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Feb - May 12	£85.13
18-Jun-12	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 12	£22.20
18-Jun-12	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 12	£66.60
18-Jun-12	Members Telephones	43820	May 12	£87.98
27-Jun-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries June 2012	£3,906.87
27-Jun-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries June 2012	£101.18
02-Jul-12	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 12	£104.12
02-Jul-12	Members Mobiles	43830	O2 - Jun 12	£58.22
02-Jul-12	Self-Employed - Website Support	44905	Hosting - Apr 12 - Apr 13	£145.00
03-Jul-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jul 12	£300.00
03-Jul-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	34 Hillsborough Rd, Lisburn - Jul - Sep 12	£3,300.00
10-Jul-12	Members Internet	43825	Jul 12	£30.00
16-Jul-12	Members Telephones	43820	Jul 12	£95.20
18-Jul-12	Members Telephones	43820	Jul 12	£23.04
20-Jul-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Lodgement 282463	-£300.00
27-Jul-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries July 2012	£3,435.81
27-Jul-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries July 2012	£101.18

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
31-Jul-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Apr - Jul 12	£126.18
01-Aug-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Aug 12	£300.00
03-Aug-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Jul 12	£133.90
03-Aug-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Jun 12	£91.46
07-Aug-12	Members Internet	43825	Aug 12	£30.00
10-Aug-12	Members Mobiles	43830	02 - Jul 12	£35.11
10-Aug-12	Members Consumables	44200	Greens Food Fare - Office Supplies	£0.72
10-Aug-12	Members Consumables	44200	Lidl - Office Supplies	£4.28
10-Aug-12	Members Consumables	44200	Semichem - Office Supplies	£4.25
10-Aug-12	Members Support Staff - Mobiles	45610	02 - Jul 12	£23.11
16-Aug-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Contr. Towards Staff Salaries	-£450.00
20-Aug-12	Members Telephones	43820	Aug 12	£23.04
20-Aug-12	Members Telephones	43820	Aug 12	£91.69
29-Aug-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries August 2012	£4,895.62
29-Aug-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries August 2012	£264.36
03-Sep-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Sep 12	£300.00
04-Sep-12	Members IT Maintenance	43400	Printer Repair	£75.60
04-Sep-12	Members Internet	43825	Sep 12	£30.00
10-Sep-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	May - Aug 12	£75.67
13-Sep-12	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 12	£70.80
13-Sep-12	Members Internet	43825	Aug 12	£115.20
24-Sep-12	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 12	£23.04
26-Sep-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	salaries September 2012	£3,832.40
26-Sep-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	salaries September 2012	£184.42
01-Oct-12	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 12	£88.87
01-Oct-12	Members Internet	43825	Oct 12	£30.00
01-Oct-12	Members Mobiles	43830	02 - Sep 12	£58.82
03-Oct-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Oct 12	£300.00
03-Oct-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	34 Hillborough Rd, Lisburn - Oct 12	£1,100.00
15-Oct-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Oct 12	£167.40
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Greens Foodfare - Office Supplies	£0.77
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£0.69
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Poundland - Office Supplies	£1.00
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Lidl - Office Supplies	£1.99
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£0.45
15-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Superdrug - Office Supplies	£3.32

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
22-Oct-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Jul - Oct 12	£135.14
22-Oct-12	Members Telephones	43820	Oct 12	£23.04
29-Oct-12	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Bridge Motor Works - Keys	£7.60
29-Oct-12	Members Mobiles	43830	02 - Oct 12	£58.48
29-Oct-12	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£6.54
29-Oct-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	salaries october 2012	£3,832.40
29-Oct-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	salaries october 2012	£184.42
31-Oct-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Nov 12	£300.00
02-Nov-12	Members Support Staff - Eye Test	45700	PJ Brogan - Oct 12	£29.00
05-Nov-12	Members Internet	43825	Nov 12	£30.00
05-Nov-12	Members Website	43835	Domain Name	£51.00
07-Nov-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Oct 12	£31.72
16-Nov-12	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Bridge Motor Works - Keys	£9.20
16-Nov-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Nov 12	£239.47
16-Nov-12	Members Consumables	44200	Marks & Spencer - Office Supplies	£7.74
16-Nov-12	Members Postage Cost	44210	Nov 12	£19.50
26-Nov-12	Members Telephones	43820	Nov 12	£23.04
28-Nov-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries November 2012	£3,870.52
28-Nov-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries November 2012	£189.68
03-Dec-12	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Dec 12	£300.00
03-Dec-12	Members Telephones	43820	Oct 12	£94.73
03-Dec-12	Members Internet	43825	Dec 12	£30.00
03-Dec-12	Members Mobiles	43830	02 - Nov 12	£58.22
10-Dec-12	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
10-Dec-12	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Aug - Nov 12	£74.83
10-Dec-12	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 12	£69.12
11-Dec-12	Members Office - Rates	43700	34 Hillsborough Rd, Lisburn - Nov 12 - Mar 13	-£1,082.82
17-Dec-12	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 12	£23.04
17-Dec-12	Members Internet	43825	Nov 12	£115.20
17-Dec-12	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Dec 12	£120.66
19-Dec-12	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries December 12	£3,851.46
19-Dec-12	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries December 12	£187.05
03-Jan-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jan 13	£300.00
03-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 12	£93.62
03-Jan-13	Members Internet	43825	Jan. 13	£30.00
03-Jan-13	Members Mobiles	43830	C2 - Dec 12	£58.22



Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
07-Jan-13	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - Dec 12	£104.00
11-Jan-13	Members Internet	43825	Dec 12 - Refund	-£16.83
14-Jan-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
14-Jan-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Jan 13	£117.66
18-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jan 13	£24.00
18-Jan-13	Members Internet	43825	Dec 12	£44.11
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jan 13	£2.40
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Nov 12	£97.98
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Rebate	-£41.98
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 12	£120.85
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Apr 12	£22.84
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Aug 12	£28.52
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Dec 12	£35.65
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jan 13	£46.72
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jul 12	£20.37
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jun 12	£20.13
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - May 12	£20.90
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Nov 12	£36.72
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Oct 12	£36.17
21-Jan-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Sep 12	£35.34
28-Jan-13	Members Mobiles	43830	O2 - Jan 13	£58.22
28-Jan-13	Members Consumables	44200	Tesco - Office Supplies	£8.00
28-Jan-13	Members Registration & Membership	44255	Data Protection Registration	£35.00
29-Jan-13	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries Jan 2013	£3,851.46
29-Jan-13	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries Jan 2013	£187.05
04-Feb-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Feb 13	£300.00
04-Feb-13	Members Newspapers	44205	May 12 - May 13	£353.00
12-Feb-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
12-Feb-13	Members Internet	43825	Feb 13	£30.00
12-Feb-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Feb 13	£122.86
12-Feb-13	Members - Accountants Fees	44150	Jan 13	£270.00
25-Feb-13	Members Telephones	43820	Feb 13	£24.00
26-Feb-13	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	salaries February 2013	£3,851.46
26-Feb-13	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	salaries February 2013	£187.05
01-Mar-13	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - Feb 13	£239.79
01-Mar-13	Members Mobiles	43830	O2 - Feb 13	£58.22

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
04-Mar-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Mar 13	£300.00
04-Mar-13	Members Telephones	43820	Feb 13	£2.40
04-Mar-13	Members Internet	43825	Mar 13	£30.00
11-Mar-13	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Apple Store - iMac	£2,478.55
11-Mar-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	Apple - iMac App & Subscription	£204.10
11-Mar-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
11-Mar-13	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Nov 12 - Feb 13	£78.34
11-Mar-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Mar 13	£268.38
19-Mar-13	Members Telephones	43820	Mar 13	£24.00
19-Mar-13	Members Telephones	43820	Feb 13	£2.40
25-Mar-13	Members Telephones	43820	Mar 13	£94.35
26-Mar-13	Members Support Staff - Basic	45000	Salaries March 2013	£3,851.46
26-Mar-13	Members Support Staff - ERNI	45100	Salaries March 2013	£187.05
28-Mar-13	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Amazon - Hard Drive	£319.00
28-Mar-13	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Totaldigitalstoos - Adapter	£8.77
28-Mar-13	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£4.88
28-Mar-13	Members Consumables	44200	Tesco - Office Supplies	£3.00
28-Mar-13	Members Consumables	44200	The Co-Op - Office Supplies	£3.86
28-Mar-13	Members Postage Cost	44210	Mar 13	£3.06
29-Mar-13	Members Office - Utilities	43800	Waste Collection - Rebate	-£87.36
11-Apr-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iTunes - Finalcut Pro	£199.99
11-Apr-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Feb 13	£45.26
11-Apr-13	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Mar 13	£37.66
11-Apr-13	Members Mobiles	43830	O2 - Mar 13	£59.76
11-Apr-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Aug 12	£114.03
11-Apr-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Sep 12	£422.25
15-Apr-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	Microsoft - MS Office	£109.99
15-Apr-13	Members Website	43835	Website Design & Development	£360.00

## Office Cost Expenditure Report - 2013 - 2014

Report Date:

24 October 2014

NI Assembly Member

101015

McCrea, Basil

Committed Expenditure

<b>Allowance</b>	April 2013 to March 2014	£ 71,378.00	Members Support Staff - Basic	£ -
<b>Committed Expenditure to 31 March 2014</b>		£ -	Members Support Staff - ERNI	£ -
<b>General Expenditure</b>		£ 30,330.08	Members Office - Rent	£ -
<b>Salary Costs</b>		£ 40,612.68	Members Office - Service Charges	£ -
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		£ 70,942.76	Members Office - Rates	£ -
			Members Room Hire	£ -
			Members Website	£ -
			Members Office Equipment Leasing	£ -
			Members Serviced Office Costs	£ -
			Outstanding Resource Costs	£ -
<b>Projected Balance/Overspend at 31 March 2014</b>		£ 435.24	<b>Total Committed Expend.</b>	£ -

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
08-Apr-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Apr 13	£300.00
12-Apr-13	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - Proximity Alarm	£69.95
12-Apr-13	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - USB Cable & Adapter	£40.00
12-Apr-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
12-Apr-13	Members Office - Rates	43700	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Apr 13 - Mar 14	£1,552.96
12-Apr-13	Members Internet	43825	Apr 13	£30.00
12-Apr-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Apr 13	£158.13
19-Apr-13	Members Telephones	43820	Apr 13	£2.40
19-Apr-13	Members Telephones	43820	Apr 13	£24.00
01-May-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - May 13	£300.00
08-May-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
08-May-13	Members Internet	43825	May 13	£30.00
13-May-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - May 13	£130.34
20-May-13	Members Telephones	43820	May 13	£2.40
28-May-13	Members Telephones	43820	May 13	£24.00
03-Jun-13	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Apple Store - Macbook	£1,365.65
03-Jun-13	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - Printer	£75.94
03-Jun-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jun 13	£300.00
03-Jun-13	Members Internet	43825	Jun 13	£30.00

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
10-Jun-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
10-Jun-13	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Feb - May 13	£80.59
17-Jun-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 13	£2.40
17-Jun-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Jun 13	£129.43
24-Jun-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 13	£24.00
01-Jul-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jul 13	£300.00
01-Jul-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jun 13	£83.70
01-Jul-13	Members Internet	43825	Jul 13	£30.00
08-Jul-13	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Fire Extinguishers	£36.00
08-Jul-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
16-Jul-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jul 13	£2.40
19-Jul-13	Members Telephones	43820	Jul 13	£24.00
29-Jul-13	Members Website	43835	Website Design & Development	£3,600.00
05-Aug-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Aug 13	£300.00
12-Aug-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
23-Aug-13	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Furniture Removal	£30.00
23-Aug-13	Members Telephones	43820	Aug 13	£2.40
23-Aug-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Aug 13	£247.72
05-Sep-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Sep 13	£300.00
09-Sep-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
09-Sep-13	Members Telephones	43820	Aug 13	£24.00
17-Sep-13	Members Office - Electricity	43815	May - Aug 13	£64.98
17-Sep-13	Members Internet	43825	Sep 13	£22.95
17-Sep-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Sep 13	£339.52
17-Sep-13	Self Employed - Repairs & Maintenance	44901	Window Cleaning - Aug 13	£3.00
30-Sep-13	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - Sep 13	£103.33
30-Sep-13	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 13	£24.00
30-Sep-13	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 13	£2.40
30-Sep-13	Members Consumables	44200	Tesco - Office Supplies	£8.78
30-Sep-13	Members Postage Cost	44210	Sep 13	£6.00
02-Oct-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Oct 13	£300.00
07-Oct-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
07-Oct-13	Members Telephones	43820	Sep 13	£293.26
07-Oct-13	Members Internet	43825	Aug 13	£30.00
07-Oct-13	Members Internet	43825	Oct 13	£30.00



# Assembly Restricted

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
07-Oct-13	Members Internet	43825	Sep 13	£30.00
11-Oct-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Oct 13	£282.31
11-Oct-13	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£4.10
11-Oct-13	Members Consumables	44200	The Ink Works - Ink	£44.60
21-Oct-13	Members Telephones	43820	Oct 13	£25.20
21-Oct-13	Members Telephones	43820	Oct 13	£2.40
04-Nov-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Nov 13	£300.00
04-Nov-13	Members Internet	43825	Nov 13	£30.00
14-Nov-13	Members Consumables	44200	Stationery	£14.99
18-Nov-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
18-Nov-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Nov 13	£276.99
18-Nov-13	Members Website	43835	Domain Name - Nov 13 - Nov 14	£48.00
18-Nov-13	Members Consumables	44200	Sainsbury's - Stationery	£4.99
18-Nov-13	Members Postage Cost	44210	Nov 13	£7.20
25-Nov-13	Members Telephones	43820	Nov 13	£25.20
02-Dec-13	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Dec 13	£300.00
03-Dec-13	Members Telephones	43820	Nov 13	£2.40
09-Dec-13	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
09-Dec-13	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Aug - Nov 13	£39.14
13-Dec-13	Members Office - Repairs & Maintenance	43220	Bridge Motor Works - Keys	£11.00
13-Dec-13	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Dec 13	£265.90
13-Dec-13	Members Postage Cost	44210	Nov 13	£0.88
16-Dec-13	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - Dec 13	£98.67
20-Dec-13	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 13	£2.40
20-Dec-13	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 13	£27.27
06-Jan-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Jan 14	£300.00
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Apr 13	£42.13
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Aug 13	£36.05
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Dec 13	£48.66
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jul 13	£36.00
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jun 13	£36.53
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - May 13	£35.96
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Nov 13	£39.36
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Oct 13	£36.42
06-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Sep 13	£35.80
06-Jan-14	Members Internet	43825	Jan 14	£30.00

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
08-Jan-14	Capital - Office Equip Purchase	43030	Knowhow - Digital Camera	£250.00
13-Jan-14	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£3.00
13-Jan-14	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Jan 14	£472.03
20-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	Jan 14	£26.40
20-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Jan 14	£37.82
27-Jan-14	Members Telephones	43820	Jan 14	£2.40
03-Feb-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Feb 14	£300.00
03-Feb-14	Members Internet	43825	Feb 14	£30.00
03-Feb-14	Members - Accountants Fees	44150	Tax Return 12/13	£270.00
03-Feb-14	Members Registration & Membership	44255	Data Protection Registration	£35.00
03-Feb-14	Members Support Staff - Training	45800	Team Leading Training - Jan 14	£900.00
17-Feb-14	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£6.00
17-Feb-14	Members Office - Oil, Fuel	43810	Morrow Fuels - Heating Oil - Feb 14	£133.00
17-Feb-14	Members Telephones	43820	Dec 13	£188.97
17-Feb-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Feb 14	£90.61
17-Feb-14	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Feb 14	£381.40
17-Feb-14	Members Office Equipment - Non Capital	44000	Currys - Tripod	£22.39
24-Feb-14	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Apple Store - iPad	£395.01
24-Feb-14	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - iPad Adaptor	£23.75
24-Feb-14	Members Telephones	43820	Feb 14	£2.40
24-Feb-14	Members Telephones	43820	Feb 14	£26.50
24-Feb-14	Members Consumables	44200	Apple - iPad Accessories	£52.30
03-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	19 Market Sq, Dromore - Mar 14	£300.00
10-Mar-14	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	iMap Account	£6.00
10-Mar-14	Members Office - Electricity	43815	Nov 13 - Feb 14	£68.21
10-Mar-14	Members Internet	43825	Mar 14	£30.00
18-Mar-14	Members Telephones	43820	BT - Mar 14	£38.46
18-Mar-14	Members Mobiles	43830	Vodafone - Mar 14	£405.74
24-Mar-14	Capital - IT Equipment Purchase	43020	Apple Store - Wireless Hard Drive	£249.00
24-Mar-14	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - Cable & Sync Kit	£49.95
24-Mar-14	Members Telephones	43820	Mar 14	£26.40
24-Mar-14	Members Telephones	43820	Mar 14	£2.40
24-Mar-14	Members Internet	43825	Dec 13	£30.00
24-Mar-14	Members Consumables	44200	Mace - Office Supplies	£12.25
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Aug 13	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Dec 13	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Feb 14	£83.33

Assembly Restricted

Transaction Date	Account Name	Account Code	Transaction Description	Amount
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Jan 14	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Mar 14	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Nov 13	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Oct 13	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Office - Rent	43600	2nd Fl, 31 Bow St, Lisburn - Sep 13	£83.33
28-Mar-14	Members Telephones	43820	Mar 14	£174.15
28-Mar-14	Members Office Equipment - Non Capital	44000	Amazon - Analogue Converter	£152.31
31-Mar-14	Members Advertising - Newsletters	44320	Print & Distribution	£9,250.00
14-Apr-14	Members Office Signage	43230	Outdoor Sign x 2	£681.60
14-Apr-14	Members Internet	43825	Dec 13 - Mar 14	£113.94
14-Apr-14	Members Mobiles	43830	Apple Store - Mobile Phone	£119.00
14-Apr-14	Members Mobiles	43830	Apple Store - iPhone	£708.00
06-May-14	Members IT Equipment - Non Capital	43450	Apple Store - External Hard Drive	£109.95
06-May-14	Members IT Software - Non-Capital	43460	Dropbox - Dropbox Storage	£58.92





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

DB 9

Private and Confidential

FAO Mr Douglas Bain  
NI Assembly Commissioner for Standards

[REDACTED]  
Parliament Buildings  
Stormont  
BT4 3XX

21st October 2014

**Ref: Visit to Canada in early 2013**

Dear Mr Bain,

Thank you for your letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, in which you asked for details of my trip to Canada in early 2013.

I did not visit Canada at any point during 2013.

However, I appreciate that your enquiry will have been prompted by items 7(b)(5) and 7(b)(6) of Mr. McCallister's complaint and it may helpful to offer some additional information.

As part of my summer holiday I visited Canada in August 2012. It was not an official visit, nor a business trip to "build connections in business for Northern Ireland". [REDACTED] did not fund the trip in any way.

It was a personal trip, paid for by me. Accordingly, I did not think it necessary to register it on the Register of Members Interests.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Basil McCrea MLA

[REDACTED]



## Internet Information – Ashley Murray (NI Jobfinder)

This document was redacted by the Committee.

## Internet Information – Ashley Murray (Princes Trust)

This document was redacted by the Committee.





## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Alan Patterson

**Date:** 11 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Alan Patterson

**Time Started:** 11.30 am

**Time Ended:** 12.45 pm

A. **DB:** First of all, thank you for coming. As I explained in the letter, because of the nature of this inquiry, I have decided to take all the evidence on oath. You can, if elected, make an affirmation instead.

**AP:** That's OK.

**DB:** Which would you prefer?

**AP:** I am not religious so I will take an affirmation.

**DB:** If you would care to read the words of the affirmation.

**AP:** I do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence that I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

B. **DB:** Thank you very much. Now, can I just confirm, Mr Patterson, that you have received perhaps twice now a note outlining the procedures?

**AP:** That is right, yes.

**DB:** Including information on the offences in connection with the interviews. You will understand that, in answering our questions, you should limit yourself to what you personally saw or heard, not what other people have told you.

**AP:** Yeah.

**DB:** I should say to you that I am at a fairly early stage in this inquiry and because witnesses that I have yet to interview may raise things that I want to take your views on, it may be necessary to have a further interview.

C. **AP:** I have a few names that you may also want to, at least, contact.

**DB:** Well, we will look at that later. Are you content then with the procedure?

**AP:** Yes, absolutely.

**DB:** Can I start off then by asking you –

**AP:** Sorry, there are a couple of text messages on this that I will be showing you.

**A. DB:** No problem at all. Can I start off by asking you how you first became involved with NI21?

**AP:** It was not NI21 at that stage; it was Basil himself. I didn't know Basil when I was in the Assembly. He joined as I was leaving effectively. I had met him once, I think, but I was interested in non-sectarian, non-tribal politics. His public pronouncements at least indicated that that was where he was coming from. So, when the issue around the flags and the policy on it and a suggestion that he might be leaving the party and starting a new one, I contacted him and said I would be interested in joining and helping out. That would have been March or April 2013.

**B. DB:** Am I right in thinking that at no time were you actually employed by Mr McCrea or NI21?

**AP:** Absolutely. I was an almost full-time voluntary. It cost me a fortune.

**DB:** Just picking up on that about the time commitment, I think that in some of the documents that you provided you have indicated that it was two days a week at Stormont.

**AP:** That was my initial intention, and that is what I said to Basil that I could deliver for him, but I was actually doing about four. It was not always up in Stormont, but it would be in preparation for the launch of the party or preparation for summer school or whatever or meetings at his partner's house. So, I would say on average around three to four.

**C. DB:** Of that three to four, how much of that would be at Stormont?

**AP:** Around two.

**DB:** So, when did you actually start up here?

**AP:** I have put some dates in this. I put everything in my phone diary and it deletes everything. I couldn't confirm that exactly, but it would have been in early June 2013.

**DB:** I think you went away on holiday.

**AP:** I was away for a couple of weeks. That is right. I met Basil in the Europa to discuss issues around politics.

**DB:** I think that I am right in saying that you were no longer involved after 17 September 2013.

- A. **AP:** 17 or 18. I still had access for about a month or so to the Google account, which I used to communicate with a few people.
- DB:** Of course, you shouldn't have been using that.
- AP:** I was surprised that I was still able to access it.
- DB:** So, that was unauthorised.
- AP:** It was not unauthorised in the sense that I was not told not to. It was not closed. It was open.
- DB:** So, what we are talking about in your evidence is really from the start of July through to the middle of September.
- B. **AP:** No. I would say my evidence is from end May early June just prior to the launch of the party. The launch of the party, I think, was 6 June.
- DB:** Which was regards what happened at Stormont.
- AP:** My evidence —
- DB:** [Inaudible].
- AP:** In the main, although when I reflect on Basil's expressions about Ashleigh in the period around the beginning of June, it seemed to contradict his expressions very shortly afterwards.
- C. **DB:** We are talking then about a period of July, August and half of September. Ten weeks at Stormont, and you said an average of two days a week. So, your evidence of what happened at Stormont is based on about 20 days in total.
- AP:** You were right the first time, but I would have had conversations with people in the office on a fairly regular basis. So, although I was only here two days, I had been speaking to the other people during the week.
- DB:** But what you saw yourself was 20 days approximately.
- AP:** Yeah.
- DB:** Why have you made this complaint?

**A. AP:** There are a couple of reasons, I think. I became aware of the Carecall investigation and had a phone call from [REDACTED] of the 'News Letter' who asked me if I would care to comment on my experience of Basil when I worked for him. That was carried on 21 May this year. Sorry, I have forgotten, what was the question?

**DB:** Why have you made your complaint?

**AP:** I had a horrible experience in here. I worked with people who were very similar in character to Basil, who misrepresented issues, who undermined their colleagues, who were abusive.

**B.** I learnt not to tolerate that and, eventually, after three or four years of it when I was here I took a complaint and won a number of internal and externally investigated complaints here. So, I am not prepared to tolerate that sort of behaviour to me. I am also not prepared to tolerate it to other people. So, when I became aware — and I left the party because of that behaviour. It further damaged me. I was seriously damaged by what happened to me in 2007 here. That has produced a number of long-term difficulties for me. Re-experiencing that with Basil was traumatic. Also, I was not happy at all and expressed that to him and to [REDACTED] about his behaviour to staff in general and to some particular people.

**C. DB:** So, if the behaviour was so traumatic, why was it that a period of 10 months elapsed after leaving NI21 until you made your complaint?

**AP:** There are a number of things, Douglas. First, there was not any mechanism for volunteers, as I was aware of, in the Assembly to make a complaint. Secondly, and perhaps more long term, I have discovered that making and winning complaints with serious findings damages careers. So, I am loath to make a complaint where there isn't a mechanism available to me or there is no mechanism evident to make that complaint. I have been seriously damaged and am still suffering some degree of reactive depression.

**DB:** You were surely [inaudible] as a result of your previous work at the Assembly aware of the code of conduct. Why did you not make a complaint?

**A. AP:** I was aware of the code of conduct, but it was not an area that I worked within. I think that it is difficult to explain that I had been damaged badly by making complaints in the past. I decided to walk at the time as opposed to make complaints. I had no intention of making any formal complaint against Basil at any stage. I was really concerned about his behaviour and expressed that to him, but I decided that the best option for me, given my history, was to walk. When I heard about the complaints of a number of people in the Carecall investigation, it was Ashleigh who gave my name and contact number to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] told me. So, I rang her to find out what was going on and the Carecall stuff was in the news at that stage. This was the moment that was the straw that broke the camel's back. She mentioned in conversation, purely innocently, I think, about an experience that she had when she was in the Lisburn office and Basil had rung her up early and said, "I am coming to collect you".

**B.** She hadn't had any contact with him for quite some time, and the relationship was obviously in terminal decline, and she was surprised about that. She explained to me that Basil said that I had called a meeting to make a formal complaint about him and this was what she was going to say. I didn't call any meeting and I didn't make a formal complaint. What is this all about? The straw that broke the camel's back was further instances of Basil making things up and totally misrepresenting the situation for his own ends. I had a meeting with Ashleigh and [REDACTED] to hand over line management responsibility for Ashleigh, and during that meeting, I mentioned my concerns about Basil's behaviour. At the same time, I had handed that management responsibility over. At the same time, I decided that I wouldn't be party secretary to NI21 any longer because of Basil's behaviour. So that was the straw that broke the camel's back, if you like.

**DB:** Before you made your complaint to me, did you discuss your intention to do so with anyone?

**C. AP:** It probably was referenced because it had been in the news that after the Carecall investigation. I have some texts, if you want to see them, of my contact with Carecall seeking to make a complaint through them. That was around, I think, I said in the correspondence of 26 May.

There were a number of texts between me and them saying, "Why haven't you contacted me?" When that collapsed, at that point, I had no further, well, people generally who thought they had no avenue to make a complaint.



- A.** I think that it might have been in conversation with John McCallister or it might have been mentioned on the TV that the complaints were going to Douglas Bain. That is why I decided to take it to you at that point.

**DB:** While that is interesting, it is not actually an answer to my question, which was whether, before you submitted your complaint to me, you discussed that with anyone?

**AP:** Making the complaint, I am sure that I probably referenced a few times can you do that? There is a text here that I have to John saying, because there was an announcement by the Assembly Commission at one point saying that it would, from then on, take complaints from Members' staff, and I wanted to find out what was the appropriate avenue to take these things to. So, it was very much about process. I say in my correspondence to you that I did check and cross-check the references I made when I said "John said this to me" or "Ashleigh said", I did check with them that I had recorded that accurately.

- B.** **DB:** Did you meet with these people to carry out that check?

**AP:** No. I emailed the extracts, but only the extracts that referred to them. I referred to that in my complaint.

**DB:** Just going back a little, when you started at the Assembly, what did you understand your position was?

**AP:** It sort of evolved. When I started, I was just there willing to give whatever assistance I could. I explained to Basil that my area of expertise was in Assembly procedures and drafting speeches.

- C.** I had been doing some critical commentating and a knowledge of local politics. So, my role, from my perspective, I was saying to him, "I am open to do lots of things, but the areas where I feel that I can be of most help to you are in Assembly business". He asked me to do various things in terms of Assembly business over those first numbers of weeks and thereafter.

**DB:** How did you come to be party secretary?

**AP:** Good point. He basically told me. He used language that I have to say I was uncomfortable with when he introduced me to staff in the office. I think he called me a sledgehammer or something like that, which is the very opposite to my approach dealing with people. So he just asked me to be.



**A.** **DB:** And your part in that was?

**AP:** It would have been, I may have referenced it in here, but, off the top of my head, it was some time in June. It was late June perhaps.

**DB:** I think you were on holiday in late June.

**AP:** Maybe just before that then.

**DB:** If that is right, that is immediately you started here. I think you first came here on 17.

**AP:** I was already party secretary at that stage. I cannot remember exactly when I got my pass.

**DB:** So, throughout the time that you were at Stormont, you were party secretary.

**B.** **AP:** I was party secretary until whenever it was in August when I gave up that post.

**DB:** Perhaps we could look at one of the documents that you very kindly supplied to me. This is a document which I have labelled AP13. You will see an email from you to Mr McCrea on 15 August in which in the first paragraph is a different role. Were you party secretary after that?

**AP:** No. Part of my complaint is that, in a conversation in the basement canteen with him at one stage, he basically seemed to suggest that I had made myself party secretary and I was completely dumbfounded by the comment. So, I do not know whether at this point, he thought that I wasn't party secretary. I never had been, but, as far as I was concerned, I was party secretary until I met with [REDACTED] on whatever date that was to relinquish line management responsibility and make it clear that I was no longer able to take that role because of Basil's behaviour.

**C.** **DB:** So, on the date of that email, was that you standing down as party secretary or did you continue until mid September?

**AP:** Oh, no. I had stood down at that stage. That was about it.

**DB:** Perhaps we will come back to that later. I was asking whether you had discussed your intention to make a complaint with anyone before making it, and you told me that you did check things with [Inaudible] and John McCallister. Did you also discuss it with John and Connor Clements?

**AP:** With John McCallister?

**A.** **DB:** No, with John and Connor Clements?

**AP:** Connor Clements, I am pretty sure that I didn't discuss it with him. I think that I had lost contact with Connor at that stage. There was the occasional tweet. I have no recollection at all of discussing it with Connor, from memory anyway. I may have mentioned Carecall perhaps in tweets or something.

**DB:** Can I just show you the documents labelled by me AP2, which is your copy of the complaint. If you look at paragraph 8, towards the end of that are words to the effect that you understand that John and Connor Clements also witnessed the –

**AP:** I knew that from conversations with Connor during my time and also during a short period afterwards when we still had Goggle+. I remember querying with Connor why, in light of those concerns with Basil, he remained part of the party. He said that he supported the ethos of the party, which I did also and –

**B.** **DB:** I am not really interested in what he said to you. I will hear it from him. We come to one of the matters of which you complain, which was Mr McCrea's treatment of you. In what particular ways do you say he mistreated you?

**AP:** He clearly was getting incorrect information from someone in the Assembly and acknowledged that at one point. In my complaint, I note that, at the very beginning of the process of meeting him, the first time that I met him in the Europa he mentioned would I be welcomed back in the Assembly. I thought that was an odd question given that I did not really know Basil, and he ought not to have known much about me, and he certainly should not know anything about my case.

**C.** I took it at that stage that someone has been spinning stories to him. So, I said nothing about it at that point, except to reassure him on my ability, contacts and reputation. He mentioned it then again in my home when he came round. I was giving him some advice on a number of Assembly business issues, I think. He was quite dark about it, not aggressive, but he used phrases like, "You have difficulty in working with people", etc. This was the sort of terminology that I had experienced with the small group of people who were found guilty of various things, including making false allegations.

I was very concerned about that at that stage, and I had a conversation with my wife expressing my concerns that someone was obviously talking to him and should I show him the background papers and all this sort of stuff. My wife and I concluded that maybe that might be wise to put his mind at ease.

**A.** Then, there was another occasion that I had not recounted in conversation which happened three or four times. The third occasion was outside the upper west car park just below the security hut in early July when he was really aggressive and threatening, and it came completely out of the blue.

**DB:** We will return to that. On the two occasions that you mentioned prior to that, there was nothing improper about that at all, was there?

**AP:** I think there was. He was not in a position in terms of when he started and shouldn't have known anything about my background.

**DB:** It was common knowledge that there were allegations against you and that you left.

**B.** **AP:** Was it? I do not know whether it was common knowledge. There are lots of things that are common knowledge that were completely untrue. [REDACTED] I spoke to him one time, thought I had been suspended. The head of HR in my Department when I went back thought that I had been put out because of the outcome of the review into the senior management team here. So, there are lots of issues around some people, but he was new to the Assembly, and I do not know where he would have got it from. It was obviously from an insider. The first time he said it, I could accept that it might have been him just checking out. The second time, however, he was really querying whether I could get on with people. This was after I had started.

**DB:** Surely, that is a perfectly proper thing for the leader of a party to ask before he engages.

**C.** **AP:** But he had already engaged me. It only becomes improper, I suspect, when it is repeated a number of times as it was over a period of time, and then it becomes a discussion with threats and aggressiveness.

**DB:** If you repeat it twice and then repeat it once and then an incident in the car park.

**AP:** Then also, of course, in the canteen when, again, he talked about people, my background in the Assembly, you know.

**DB:** As regards the incident in the car park, was anyone else present?

**A. AP:** No.

**DB:** As regards the incident in the canteen, was anyone else present?

**AP:** No, but it doesn't make it less true.

**DB:** No, but it does mean, doesn't it, that if there are differing accounts about it, there is no independent evidence.

**AP:** I accept that, but the judgment that you have to make, and I have made it in my complaint is whether or not there is a common thread running through what people are saying here. I am an absolutely truthful individual, and I am telling you the truth here.

**DB:** Well, I hope so because you have taken a solemn affirmation.

**AP:** That is why I said that, Douglas. I am telling you the truth.

**B. DB:** And you would be breaking the law if you didn't. You deal with the part of your complaint where you say that he repeated false allegations about you. Other than the two occasions that you have mentioned, did that happen on other occasions?

**AP:** The claims that he was making, which were incorrect, were that I had some sort of mental health problem or learning disability, that I had difficulty with dealing with staff and relationships with staff, I was bureaucratic, etc. He did that at least on four occasions. I think that I have referenced four in the complaint, and each time with increasing aggressiveness.

**DB:** On any of these occasions was there any independent person present?

**C. AP:** I would expect that Basil is sharp enough not to do that in the presence of other people.

**DB:** My question was: on any of these four occasions –

**AP:** [Inaudible].

**DB:** I understood you to tell me a few moments ago that your reason for standing down or severing your links was because of these allegations.

**AP:** And his general treatment of staff. I felt that the party was being damaged because of his behaviour.

**A.** I had a visit from a number of people shortly after I left the party who wanted me to help them unseat him as party leader because of his behaviour, and I refused.

**DB:** You say in your complaint to me that you regard Mr McCrea's conduct or the rumours that he was spreading, according to you, about you as being defamatory.

**AP:** Yes, because they are grossly untrue.

**DB:** Have you taken any action about that?

**AP:** No, I haven't.

**DB:** Why not?

**AP:** Because legal action costs money.

**B.** **DB:** But if you win, you get your expenses.

**AP:** You do, but it is not an area that I would prefer to go down. Again, I will stress that I have been through formal complaints procedures in the past and found it hugely stressful and lost everything as a result of winning. So, I would be loath to go back into that sort of area. So, it is not a lack of confidence in the accuracy and the veracity of what I am saying.

**DB:** Can we look then at another document, if I can find it? I am referring to a document labelled AP13.

**AP:** The one you just showed me.

**C.** **DB:** Yes, the email from you to Basil on 15 August where you discussed different roles, and you promised to reflect back. He had suggested to you that you might stand as a candidate in the council elections, and you could work with Peter on some policies.

**AP:** He didn't suggest that; I suggested that. I cleared that with Peter as a possibility.

**DB:** Why is it if Mr McCrea was spreading these scurrilous rumours about you, there is no mention of that in that email?

**AP:** I think there is a mention in other emails we referred to where we discussed concerns.

**DB:** The question was: Why is there no mention of it in that email?



**A. AP:** Because I am dealing with the conversation we had. I am being professional. There is no need for me every time to raise concerns in a communication with somebody. I deal with them directly and appropriately if I can. My concern was to get offside with Basil because of his behaviour, but I support the ethos of the party and the need for the party. Therefore, I was content for a period of time until, on further reflection, I thought, "No. This is going to implode around Basil, and I really don't want to be working with that guy." My support was for the party. My support was always for the party. It had nothing whatsoever to do with Basil McCrea as a person.

**DB:** After that email in the middle of August, you were continuing to work for the party.

**B. AP:** Yeah. I had started to have some contact with Peter Hutchinson about policy issues that I could look at. At that stage, I had become a bit weary of the whole thing.

**DB:** Can we look then at another email that you sent to Mr McCrea on 10 September. This is AP15. This is the one where you were severing your links and you say, "I have reflected on the negative impact of conversations an undisclosed Assembly staff member has had on your perception of me". You go on to say, "While I can understand why they were malicious, totally incorrect information might have caused you concerns. I am not prepared to work under a kind of mischief making". There is no mention in AP15 of Mr McCrea having spread any rumours about you.

**C. AP:** Why would I? I was leaving. The purpose of the short email saying, "I have reflected on this. There is a lot of mischief making". The mischief making I am talking about there is his behaviour and the way that he has used the information being given to him in an aggressive and threatening manner. So, it is just simply a short email saying, "I am leaving" as result of that. I don't know where you are coming from in this, but my

**DB:** Where I am coming from is to try and ascertain the truth.

**AP:** I appreciate that. I understand that. I had learnt from bitter experience that making complaints causes you damage. I had been seriously damaged. I had been damaged again and traumatised by whatever was going on between McCrea and whoever in the Assembly was talking to him and his behaviour to me. My reaction at that point was to say, "This is something that I would have liked to have been doing to have gone into front-line politics.

- A.** This is an ethos that I would have wanted to support, but this is a man whose behaviour is beyond the pale, both to me and to other people, and I think it is going to implode around him, and I am not prepared to tolerate it any longer. So, I am leaving." I had no thoughts on legal action or to make formal complaints at that point because, one, I did not think there was an avenue I could do so, being a volunteer with the party, and, two, I didn't look into it in any detail. I was just fed up and upset.

**DB:** I will go back to your earlier issues. You said in your complaint that Mr McCrea never made it clear to you what your role was to be.

**AP:** It varied all the time. He just added things on. He did that with everybody.

- B.** **DB:** I am only concerned with what he did with you. It would be pretty surprising, wouldn't it, if only a few weeks after a new party had been formed for him to be able to give you very precise information on —

**AP:** Yeah. You know there is demarcation. Could I just reflect on the last question? I would have said directly to Basil my concerns. I didn't necessarily want to write them down all the time. Yeah, I understand that, but there are demarcation lines in the Assembly between constituency business, Assembly business and whatever. A party secretary role, I would have thought, would have been about party business, but I was saying to Basil at the outset my areas of expertise, if you like, where I think it would help him most are in Assembly business, but what I found was that I was being asked to do whatever, whether it was organisational in terms of launches or summer schools, whether it was man managing people, dealing with recruitment areas, it was whatever he decided.

- C.** The party relied on volunteers to a tremendous degree. Therefore, the work was thrown around by Basil and it varied. He would tell you one thing one day and say it to somebody else you do it another way. For example, he asked me to draft a speech for the launch, but he also asked other people that he didn't know. He just did that. Whether it is chaotic or whether it is deliberate is a question. I know from experience with him that he absolutely refused any sort of structure being imposed or developed in terms of clarity of roles, in terms of making sure that people weren't being asked to do the same thing as somebody else. He really preferred to remain absolutely in control.

**DB:** As party secretary, was it not part of your job to define roles?

A. **AP:** That's what I thought, and that's what we agreed at the beginning. When he appointed me as party secretary, he said, "My staff aren't working. I go in there and they are doing bog all. They are useless". It was really derogatory stuff. "I want you to make sure that they have jobs to do and that they're busy". I explained to him my approach to it, which would be to find out what they did, to agree roles for them and to identify some performance targets in terms of outcomes and dates and whatever. We went through that process. I did that with every individual who was involved up in Stormont. I copied the notes to [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Basil.

There were issues coming out of that from most of the people that I talked to in relation to how Basil operated, but he clearly didn't want me to do that. It was fine to ask it, but once he saw that it resulted in some clarity of roles and reduced confusion, he seemed to backtrack and say, "No, I didn't want that" and he said "Who asked you to do that?" It is hard to rationalise his behaviour.

B. **DB:** At the meeting in the Europa in early June, you did discuss in some detail precisely what your role would be.

**AP:** We discussed a range of areas, some of which I would not have been happy with at all, and I sent him a note back saying, "We discussed this" and a list of things. I think things were raised in very much an open-ended conversation that I would not have had any expertise in, like social media. It is something that I am not really interested in. I do a bit of tweeting but that's it. That's only a fairly recent thing. I wouldn't have any expertise or interest in that. So, that email is a reflection of the conversation, but that agenda changed quite quickly when other things were asked.

**DB:** As you would expect with a newly formed party.

C. **AP:** Absolutely. I have no difficulty in doing a range of duties and multitasking.

**DB:** So, in what way do you say that failing to give you clarity in your role with absolute precision is a breach of the code of conduct?

**AP:** I didn't say that he failed to give me it; what I said was that he failed to give clarity. The way that he seemed to operate was deliberately to create confusion and chaos. I think he is a bad manager, but I think there is a deliberate aspect of his chaos to make sure that no one gains any sort of influence or becomes too strong or they are kept in their place. He seemed to spread rumours about people behind their backs and whatever, while they thought they were doing a competent job or working away on whatever he had asked them to do.



- A.** So, my concern, and what I am saying is that he was chaotic by nature but he also used abused chaos. He didn't want to define roles, so, for example, people would appear in the office not knowing who they were.

There was one girl [REDACTED] who had a background in communication strategy. We were in dire need because there were a lot of problems. We had lost a communications director already – [REDACTED] whatever his name is – and we needed a strategy. Most people felt that that was really important. She had all the experience and background skills to do it. I suggested that she speak to Basil about doing that. He just didn't want a strategy. You saw the same thing with Ashleigh in the Lisburn office. He would do an email saying, "She's going to Lisburn. She's going to be doing this and that". Then he would do nothing to facilitate it. In fact, he would almost undermine it.

- B.** **DB:** Can we come back to, why do you say that his failure to clearly define your role was a breach of the code of conduct?

**AP:** Listed in the second letter is about reasonable decisions, a clear approach, treating people with respect. If you are giving people roles, and you are taking them away or giving them jobs to do that they are not competent to do or experienced enough to do or you are changing the landscape all the time, I think that is in breach of various principles in the code and how he should be dealing with individuals.

**DB:** I was thinking, of course, in relation to you if he was acting as party leader in relation to you as a worker for the party.

**AP:** I was a volunteer for the party.

**DB:** A volunteer worker.

- C.** **AP:** I would expect, nonetheless, for example, when we agreed that I would look at the roles, there was different work to do, focus on outcomes and whatever. Having done the work, and I spent some time doing that on a number of people and did notes, I would have expected that, at the end of the day, there would have been some coming together of minds. He mightn't have agreed. What I got was, "What are you doing that for? Who asked you to do that? I tell people what they are doing. You are not".

**DB:** One of the other matters that you raise in our complaint is that he brought young people to Stormont and left them with you and Karen.

- A.**     **AP:** He didn't leave them with anyone; he just left them basically.
- DB:** How often did you see this happen?
- AP:** Every week. There might have been the odd exception, but it was regular.
- DB:** That would be eight times.
- AP:** You are asking me questions that are a bit difficult to answer at this distance, but I would say most weeks there was somebody sitting in the office when I would have arrived. I would have got in about half 10ish. It was regular enough for Karen to say, "I don't know who that is" or "What are they doing here? What do we do with them?" She was stressed out a little bit about people just appearing without any forewarning as to who they were. She was supposed to deal with them. She was really in charge of the office here.
- B.**     **DB:** Were these all young people?
- AP:** Yeah. I can't think of anybody who was beyond their twenties.
- DB:** Were they all female?
- AP:** Not all but mostly.
- DB:** How many people with [Inaudible]?
- AP:** Usually one to two. [REDACTED] and her boyfriend [REDACTED] were among them.
- C.**     I am the sort of person who is hands on. If I come into an office and I have a role to play in terms of the organisation of the place, and I see somebody sitting there, I will approach them and say "Who are you?" and make conversation with them and get them a cup of coffee and find out what they think they are here to do and find out what they would like to do and try to find a niche for them somewhere or a task that they might find interesting and have the skills to do.
- DB:** That would be perfectly reasonable for a party secretary to do.
- AP:** well, I don't know that it was. It might be perfectly reasonable for someone who had line management responsibility, but I was a volunteer. I wasn't going to be here every day of the week. I am sure there were other days of the week when people turned up that I wasn't here.

- A.** That wasn't a specific role that I was asked to do, and it wouldn't be a specific role that I would have expected to do or would have been happy to do. I did it because it's my nature.

**DB:** It wouldn't be unusual for a PA to take on looking after people who come to see her boss, would it?

**AP:** I think it was more than that, Douglas. I think these people were dropped in without any forewarning. Nobody was ever clear about why they were there or who they were. Were they coming to help for a period of time? Were they just in to whatever? The office was cramped. The office was this size. I would have sat in the corner on a seat. There was nowhere to sit.

- B.** You could have had 10 people in the office. So, it was creating an element of chaos in the office the very fact that there were a lot of people around. It would have impacted on people's ability to talk about business to some degree in terms of confidentiality. It is also about the impression that you give to people that come to Stormont and come to a new party that is presenting a new approach to politics.

**DB:** So, doubtless, you raised your concerns to Mr McCrea about this?

**AP:** No. It was a conversation that went on amongst people in the office really. I may have done, but I don't recall directly saying to him all these people are coming.

**DB:** Surely, if Mr McCrea is inviting people and that is causing chaos in the –

**AP:** I would have had conversations with him.

- C.** **DB:** You should have raised it with Mr McCrea.

**AP:** I may well have done. None of this was formalised at this stage, and I was only here for a couple of months.

**DB:** Sorry, I don't understand that. You just told me that you didn't, and now you say that you may well have done.

**AP:** No, I think that the recording will say that I may have done, but I have no direct recollection. I do recall certainly saying, "You are causing the chaos in your approach to the allocation of work and your management of people, and people are stressed out by it". Whether or not, in that conversation, Douglas, I may have said, new people coming in. It is something that I can't recall at this point, but I didn't raise it formally.

**A. DB:** So, this was of such concern and so important that you now have no recollection of raising it with Mr McCrea.

**AP:** What I am saying, Douglas, is that there is a whole realm of behaviours here. Individually, some would be fairly non-descript, but, collectively, they add up to a general abuse of people and staff. A refusal to comply with the basics of decent and appropriate management processes to make sure that people have a general idea about what they are doing and facilitating them in doing it. For example, Karen Tabane is diary secretary. He didn't want to spend any time telling her what he was doing. She was really stressed out about this. I have been a diary secretary to a Minister in a private office in my second job in the Civil Service. I know how critical it is to spend 15 minutes a week with your boss going through the diary, especially when he has a huge amount of photo shoots and all sorts of stuff coming from everywhere and new parties. It is critical to have some degree of communication and coordination.

**B. DB:** One of the other issues that you raise is that Mr McCrea tried to pressurise a witness to reconsider the evidence.

**AP:** That is Ashleigh. It actually might have been an innocent comment from her when she thought that I arranged a meeting to make a formal complaint about him, and she was going as a witness or whatever. This is what he told her when he basically instructed her on what she should and shouldn't say at this meeting that I had allegedly arranged with [REDACTED] and her.

**DB:** So, do you have any personal knowledge of any action by Mr McCrea?

**AP:** Only from what Ashleigh has told me in conversation.

**DB:** So, the answer is no. You have no personal knowledge.

**C. AP:** Yeah, well, she could be lying.

**DB:** Or mistaken?

**AP:** Or mistaken, but my recollection of the conversation is not mistaken, and I am not lying.

**DB:** You mentioned that you sent Mr McCrea two emails in paragraph 29.

**AP:** These are the emails that he takes extracts from.

**DB:** Do you have these?

- A.** **AP:** I sent them to you. One was the short one where I leave, and the other one might be the AP13. Off the top of my head, they probably are the ones.

**DB:** OK.

**AP:** What McCrea says in the article here, I have been contacted by the 'News Letter', and I was fairly held back in my comments about him, was that staff had problems with me and that is why I left. That is completely untrue. I wasn't aware of any problems staff had with me. He made that claim without being willing to specify who they were, except to say that it was everybody and without being willing to specify what the complaints were in the canteen meeting that I referred to.

- B.** **DB:** Can we move on to, I am afraid that I don't know how to pronounce the name, [Inaudible].

**AP:** I can't remember for sure.

**DB:** Let's move on. Do you by any chance have any contact details?

**AP:** No, I don't. All I am aware of is that she was crying and she went home.

**DB:** Regarding the so-called voyeuristic photographs

**AP:** I haven't seen them.

**DB:** You haven't seen them, so you wouldn't know.

**AP:** All I have seen is what has been in the media. Maybe you've seen them.

- C.** **DB:** One of the issues you have raised in your complaint is that Mr McCrea didn't appear to accept her questioning his decisions. What's wrong with that?

**AP:** Well –

**DB:** Just to be clear, Mr McCrea was the party leader.

**AP:** I understand that.

**DB:** Jacqueline was a very young, inexperienced –

**AP:** I agree. She was inexperienced, and she would sometimes say things that were a bit foolish. There was one occasion.



- A.** I mean this is second hand from her. When she said one time, "I'm going to have a word with him about something that was said", she didn't specify what it was, but the impression that I got was that it was about something he had done and about his behaviour. I had also got the impression that it might be something to do with an inappropriate approach, but I have no direct evidence of that.

**DB:** Do you have any direct knowledge at all of anything improper towards Jacquelyn?

**AP:** Only from what she said in reference to photographs. My complaint covers three angles. One is his overall behaviour to staff and some specific staff. It was observational to some degree and direct experience to some degree. What I say specifically in the complaint is if other people corroborate this, if you like, there is a common thread running. So, I accept that part of my evidence is circumstantial or, if you like, second hand. I have no problem with that.

- B.** **DB:** But as regards Jacquelyn Neglia, you have —

**AP:** I accept that Basil on one occasion or maybe even two occasions said that he was debating whether or not to keep this girl who had travelled all the way from Canada, taking a leap of faith, who had stopped her academic studying to facilitate him. He was saying that he may not retain her. The impression I had was that that was because she had the audacity to occasionally disagree with him. My sense of him and my experience of him and other people's experience of him also seem to be that if you disagree with Basil, he shafts you behind your back.

**DB:** You also made an issue with regard to Mr McCrea's conduct towards Mr McCallister. What did you personally see?

- C.** **AP:** It happened on two occasions at Monday meetings when he openly expressed concern about John's commitment, where was he, and he used to have a word with him about this and this sort of approach. Basil liked to present himself as the one who was doing all the work.

**DB:** Just to be clear, these were Monday morning meetings.

**AP:** These were Monday morning meetings. Certainly, the recollection was Monday morning meetings.

**DB:** These were party meetings.

**A.**     **AP:** Yes, at which there would have been others and would have included people who happened to be here on the day, visitors, if you like.

**DB:** Mr McCrea was there in his capacity as leader of the party.

**AP:** Well, he was leader of the party, so that was the only capacity he had at that stage.

**DB:** Not as an MLA?

**AP:** He was leader of the party because he is an MLA. I was helping him in Stormont, so I think that they are both indistinguishable, to be honest.

**B.**     **DB:** Well, we will see.

**AP:** He was talking about a colleague who was another MLA as well.

**DB:** Other than these incidents at the party meetings, do you have any other examples of anything you say was misconduct by Mr McCrea towards Mr McCallister?

**AP:** There were two occasions that I am pretty sure would be [Inaudible] a copy of Monday morning meetings when he openly criticised John. I think there may have been other occasions in conversations with him. It is not something that I take a mental note of where he would have criticised his commitment to me and to others who were present, but it not something that I was taking mental notes of.

**C.**     **DB:** So, that may have happened or it may not have happened.

**AP:** I would be fairly sure that it did, but I haven't taken a mental note of it, so I could be wrong.

**DB:** Sorry, it does cause me concern that a moment ago you said you didn't know if it happened. You said there may have been other occasions.

**AP:** I said there may have been other occasions.

**DB:** If there really had been, there must be –

**AP:** Douglas, I'm not a forensic scientist, and I didn't take a mental note of every incident. Basil's inappropriate behaviour was a daily occurrence. I wasn't writing it all down. I know that Karen Tabane apparently was writing it down.

**A.** It is my recollection of events over a three-month period that happened just over a year ago.

**DB:** One of the other complaints you make about Mr McCrea is that he failed to develop policies.

**AP:** He didn't appear to attempt to develop policies.

**DB:** What on earth has that got to do with breaching the Members' code of conduct?

**AP:** Well, I think it has, perhaps in an indirect way. I have raised concerns about his absolute disdain for constituents. He is employed as an MLA. He is employed to represent people, to deliver services and to suggest new areas of services. That's his job. So, why isn't it to do with the code of conduct?

**B.** I would have expected to find, and I know a lot of good MLAs – some not – and John McCallister certainly is one, an MLA to go about the business of politics, which is what they were getting paid to do. I found no evidence, in the three months that I was involved with Basil, that he was in any way interested in constituency work or developing any policies for a new party that was trying to present themselves as fresh politics. I say in the thing he seemed to have no interest in development beyond the mantra.

**DB:** The other bit of your complaint against Mr McCrea is that he focused on media issues.

**C.** **AP:** He seemed to focus almost exclusively on social media. Social media plays a part in modern politics.

**DB:** Why is focusing on media issues a breach of the code of conduct?

**AP:** I am saying that in the wider context and making the point that his interest didn't appear to be in his constituents or in serving his constituents or doing the job an MLA was elected to do. My reading of the code of conduct says that that is what he is there to do, and he is not doing that and not behaving appropriately as an MLA.

**DB:** One of the documents you very kindly sent me a link to is the Assembly and Executive Review Committee on d'Hondt..

**AP:** D'Hondt.



**A. DB:** Could you explain briefly what you consider the relevance of that to your complaint is?

**AP:** Well, in your response to my initial complaint, you asked for detailed evidence of a number of things, where and when, what was said, who was there and how this related to his role as an MLA. I have given you a number of examples of me working for him as an MLA and a public representative. This is Assembly business; this is not NI21 business. So, he asked me to look at that and to give him advice on this contact and issues that were arising out of it, in the same way that he asked me for advice on unparliamentary language and a number of things that were not squarely Assembly business.

So, you have asked me to confirm that the work I was doing with him was as an MLA. That is just one example of the work that I was doing with him. That's all.

**B. DB:** Oh, I see. So, the actual content –

**AP:** I send you a copy of an email from Fiona where she sent me that. That is evidence that he had asked me to do something that was Assembly business.

**DB:** Turning to Mr McCrea's conduct towards Ashleigh Murray, you've told me that you disagreed about what you said about her with her.

**AP:** She has confirmed that I gave an accurate – she didn't make any changes. She confirmed that I accurately reflected what she had told me. I didn't want to misrepresent what she or John said in respect of the mental disabilities that Basil accused people of.

**C. DB:** You are upset that Mr McCrea organised a whispering campaign against Ashleigh Murray.

**AP:** That was my impression.

**DB:** What evidence do you have that Mr McCrea instigated such a campaign?

**AP:** It is covered to a degree in his behaviour to other people in the comments he made to other people about me and in the comments that he made to other people about other people. A number of people are saying he does this. Jacquelyn and Kirsty were in a very close working relationship with Basil for most of the period that I was with the party.

- A.** They were the ones who were making the "She's dangerous" claims. He also said she was unreliable. I think I sent you a series of texts where he says about her lack of reliability, in his view, a week after she had been appointed.

**DB:** That is very different from an accusation that Mr McCrea orchestrated a whispering campaign.

**AP:** I can't give you direct evidence that it was him that told Jacquelyn or Kirsty that Ashleigh is dangerous. What I am saying is that there seemed to be a number of incidents involving me and others where people are saying Basil is the source. I can see how a colleague may say to someone, "She's a bit unreliable", but it is unusual to say, is it not, that someone is dangerous. This is the usual language that Basil was using. It reflects the language and approach that Basil was having to Ashleigh. So, I think it is a reasonable extrapolation that the sources of this bad press about Ashleigh was coming, certainly in part, from Basil because he did it to other people and he did it to me.

- B.** **DB:** How do you know it didn't come from Jacquelyn, for example?

**AP:** It is possible. You make a judgement in the round, and you will have to do that same thing. You will have a number of people saying things that he said. It seemed to me that was his approach and his universal approach to undermine people, especially when he thought they were a little bit too influential or they didn't do what he wanted them to do, sometimes without any reason at all, I suspect.

**DB:** You thought that this whispering campaign, whoever was the source of it, started in July 2013.

- C.** **AP:** I first met Ashleigh at one of the pre-launch meetings in the MAC. My hearing is not brilliant in crowds anymore, so there was something said apparently, and a number of people commented to Ashleigh about it and she was clearly upset. I talked with her, when I was walking back to my car after the meeting, and we walked together for a while, and she was visibly upset. So, I met Ashleigh for the first time then. She was his PA doing all his business, travel, whatever, and only a very short period after, I met Kirsty who appeared to take over all her responsibilities. Basil said very conclusively at the beginning at that time, "Here is a girl who's damaged, who's had it difficult but she's really good, really clever. She just needs a wee bit of direction".

**A.** **DB:** Ashleigh had been working for Mr McCrea for some time on a voluntary basis until, in July, she reverted to paid employment as a result of his interventions in Lisburn.

**AP:** I'm not sure if it was his interventions or not. I was involved in dealing with First Start or putting people first in organising that. [REDACTED] I think, may have been involved in it as well. I'm not sure how much Basil was involved in it.

**DB:** It would hardly have happened without him.

**AP:** Yeah. He obviously took a decision to find a job for this girl.

**B.** **DB:** To find paid work for the first time.

**AP:** Quite possibly, yes.

**DB:** That was the case.

**AP:** That is what happened. As far as I am aware, he topped up her payment from OCA or OCE, or whatever it's called.

**DB:** There were concerns, weren't there, about Ashleigh's performance?

**AP:** I've said in the thing that I was aware that there were some reliability issues, and I have explained where I thought they came from. I have also explained that I thought she was really good, that she worked hard, that she got things done, that she had a lot of skills, given her background. I think she had to get two buses to work.

**C.** **DB:** Was there a problem with reliability issues?

**AP:** I think she could be late on occasions. I had a few words with her about the importance of developing a discipline about these sorts of things, the same that you would do with any employee. You would encourage them and point out areas where they need to improve and monitor it to some degree. I would do that with anyone. There was positive engagement, but I saw nothing in her ability or her endeavour or her approach to work to give me any concerns. Basil expressed no uncertainty when he talked to me about it at the beginning of June. It just seemed to change round very quickly, dramatically even.

**DB:** Is it your evidence that it was only Basil that had concerns?

**A.** **AP:** My evidence is that other people who expressed those concerns, my impression, based on Basil's behaviour with other people and also the content of

what was being said, was that Basil was feeding those lines. Jacquelyn and particularly Kirsty were very close to Basil. Kirsty had taken Ashleigh's job. I had noted, and I say so, a few reliability issues, but I didn't think they were of any serious consequence, and I had a word with her about them. Overall, she was more than satisfactory.

**DB:** You talked again there of reliability issues, so it wasn't just turning up late.

**AP:** That's the only thing I would have had.

**DB:** That is an issue not issues.

**AP:** Sorry, I am stating the plural. I wasn't aware of any others.

**B. DB:** Her work wasn't of a very high standard, was it?

**AP:** Was it? Who said so?

**DB:** Well, for example, you sent me a minute of a meeting that she attended, and it's littered with grammatical errors.

**AP:** I think that's unfair. That is extreme. A lot of public servants in high office make grammatical errors. This is a young girl who had a very difficult background. I don't know what her educational attainment is, but she had a lot of skills that the party were using in terms of organisational skills, in terms of dealing with people, in terms of dealing with constituents, social media.

**C.** She had a lot of skills, IT skills as well. Whether or not she could write a note that didn't have grammatical errors doesn't mark her out as not being good or bad, not in my view anyway. She is not a civil servant.

She was employed by [REDACTED] following an interview, I think it was 8 July commencing on 15 July. Within a week, Basil was castigating the girl. In my view, as a manager of people, that is entirely wrong and unfair and asking it to be kept private into the bargain. That is a series of texts that end with "By the way, these texts are private" as soon as he sent the texts.

**DB:** What's wrong with that?

**A.**     **AP:** Well, if you're disparaging someone, especially someone who's just newly employed on a formal basis, and you are making claims that they are doing things that they shouldn't be doing, I think if you are asking to keep it secret, you are saying "I don't want people to know what I am saying about people when it's negative". If you have a concern about someone, generally speaking, I address it to them personally. I don't go behind their back. Basil seemed to make that his standard approach.

**DB:** You obviously had concerns about timekeeping.

**AP:** I think there were one or two instances when she was a bit late.

**DB:** Indeed, you tended to make unannounced visits to the Lisburn office.

**B.**     **AP:** Most of that was because of what I was being told by Basil and this stuff coming out about unreliability. I didn't have any real reason, apart from one or two times she was late. I had no direct experience. My experience of her was positive. So, I am inheriting a degree of line management responsibility for someone, and I am aware that people are saying they are unreliable. I have had one or two examples of it where they are a bit late for something. I haven't seen anything else that concerned me at all. So, monitoring just means, you know, she is down there on her own. It wouldn't have been appropriate just to leave her on her own cast adrift. So, it would have been a reasonable, positive and supportive thing for me to go down from time to time to see how things were going and make sure she had a job to do.

**DB:** Did you use other people to check on her?

**C.**     **AP:** They were there. Because Basil was saying these things, I was basically saying, "Look Basil, let me get on and manage her". There are people who are there, and if there are any concerns I will probably hear about it, and I will be down myself unannounced sometimes.

**DB:** So, she wouldn't have been down there on her own.

**AP:** There was a guy [REDACTED] who was there from time to time. She was mainly on her own.

**DB:** So, you set to work dismissing Basil's concerns out of hand.



- A. **AP:** I take things until otherwise proven wrong with people. These things were being said about her. She had been late a couple of times, and I had a word with her about that and encouraged her about the importance of discipline. So, I think that is perfectly feasible to be aware of things and to manage them and to make sure they don't become an issue. That is what a good manager does.

**DB:** Do you have any personal knowledge of any inappropriate relationship between Mr McCrea and Ashleigh?

**AP:** I wasn't aware of the sexual issues at all. I had some growing concerns with the number of young girls that were about and things were being said about the number of girls that were around. He always got a lot of abuse about the Basil dolls and all this sort of stuff. These were issues in your head, but I hadn't enough direct evidence to raise any formal or informal concern about that.

- B. As I began to become concerned about it, I approached, and I think somebody else did – it might have been [REDACTED] and Suzanne Chalkley. I am not sure if Connor or somebody else might have been there. I really don't recall exactly who was there, but it was [REDACTED] and, I think, Suzanne. The concerns were being raised at that point, not with me but with [REDACTED] and whoever. [REDACTED] had spoken to Basil about whether or not he had an inappropriate relationship or sexual relationship with Ashleigh, and [REDACTED] explained to Suzanne and whoever else was present that Basil was emphatic that he had no sexual relationship or inappropriate relationship with Ashleigh that he had been indiscreet about what he had said to her.

**DB:** Someone else told you that he said.

- C. **AP:** That is what [REDACTED] told me and others. He will deny everything.

**DB:** Why, if you had some concerns sufficient to go and speak to [REDACTED] about it, did you not speak to Basil about it? You told me just a moment ago that if you had concerns about someone, you shouldn't keep it secret; you should go to them and speak to them.

**AP:** My concerns weren't based on any direct experience. I hadn't seen him do it. I had noted the number of young females. I had noted he was a bit of a lad, and I suspect that he was a little bit of a predator, but I had no direct evidence to make anything in terms of a complaint in terms of sexual impropriety.

**DB:** Although you had nothing substantive, you raised it with someone else.

**A.** **AP:** Because it was becoming an issue, I think, that was a little bit nebulous. The issues around "She's dangerous" and all this sort of thing and people saying things, I think actually became a rumour that there was some sort of sexual relationship. I don't know at the time. There were a number of things going round at that stage. There was always a lot of conversation amongst people in the office about Basil's behaviour. So, it might have been that that prompted me and others. I don't think [REDACTED] questioned Basil because I raised anything. I think somebody else did.

**DB:** I am finding it very hard to reconcile what you told me a few moments ago, complaining that Basil had asked you to keep something secret.

**AP:** It wasn't about sexual relations.

**B.** **DB:** If you had concerns about somebody, you should go direct to them about it. You had concerns about Mr McCrea and you chose not to go to him.

**AP:** That's not true. I went to Mr McCrea on a number of things. On the sexual stuff, I have no recollection of doing that.

**DB:** Why not?

**AP:** Because I didn't have enough evidence. It was, at that stage, a bit of a rumour relating only to Ashleigh.

**DB:** But, although it was a bit of a rumour, you felt it appropriate to go and speak to someone else but not Mr McCrea about it.

**C.** **AP:** No. My recollection of it is that someone else - maybe [REDACTED] herself - heard some things being said, and she approached, she didn't approach Basil because of anything I said. I just happened to be part of the conversation as a result of that.

**DB:** You approached [REDACTED] about your concerns about Basil's sexual behaviour, didn't you?

**AP:** No, I don't think I did, to be honest. I think that might have been part of the conversation out of other issues. [REDACTED] was very critical of Basil and called him a prat basically, but she supported the ethos of the party and said you shouldn't judge it on the temporary leader. My concerns about Basil were really about his behaviour to staff in general, abusive bullying, lack of encouragement, chaos and abusive behaviour to me and his behaviour to Ashleigh in terms of the unreliability, asking her to do things and then telling me that he didn't ask her.

- A.** The stuff about her being dangerous and that sort of stuff is where my area of concern was in relation to Ashleigh. It wasn't the sexual stuff. I was quite an innocent abroad. I wasn't here often enough, I don't think. Regrettably, I didn't know Basil well. There was a clerk in here a few weeks ago said to me, "If you had talked to me about him, I would have told you to stay well clear of him". Clearly, his reputation was known in the building, but it wasn't known to me.

**DB:** You mentioned that you had two texts that I hadn't seen before.

**AP:** Sorry, this is my old phone, but the texts are still on it. Are you asking what, when, why?

- B.** **DB:** It is always useful to tie things down.

**AP:** Let me find them here. Text from Carecall. This is dated 6 June. I think I said that I contacted them towards the end of May, and they were to ring me. So, the text was, "You were going to contact me this week about the Basil McCrea investigation. There are issues that I would want included in your deliberations". Then, she replied saying, "Hi, Alan. After we spoke, I passed on your details to our lead investigator. We will be in touch to arrange a time to speak. I can't say exactly when at the moment. I am sorry, but I will call you on Wednesday afternoon either way". She never did "Kind regards, [REDACTED]". "That is fine", I said to [REDACTED] That is on 9 June.

- C.** On 13 June, "I am just hearing", this is when the news came out "that the Carecall investigation collapsed, that the report had been sent to NI21 before it was completed". as far as I was concerned, "without my chance to put relevant evidence. I am very disappointed that the investigator made no effort to contact me". That is the end of that one.

I mentioned also, I think, Suzanne Chalkley. I said that I met Suzanne on the refreshments bus before we went to be extras in "The Fall", and we were just having a conversation, and she had been responsible for membership and whatever else Basil would have given to her at the time. She recounted incidences of inappropriate behaviour from Basil.

**DB:** No doubt, she will tell me.



**A. AP:** She also told me that he rang her three times during the Carecall investigation, but she didn't answer the phone. I suggested that that maybe was because of the past and an attempt to persuade her not to say too much. Maybe it wasn't; it was just, "Hello. I haven't spoken to you for six months or a year". In the conversation in the text, I say, "Hi movie star. I hear the story of sexual harassment might break re NI21" - it must have been covered in the news at that stage - "Sounds lurid and would reflect the concerns we discussed". "Hi Alan. That doesn't sound too good. Glad we are out. I was called for another extra". Then she asked me, "Do you know who is linked to the story?" I said, "Allegedly, Basil and Ashleigh". She says, "I wondered why he was so insistent that I deal with her so that he could distance himself". She said on the set that she had been asked to do damage limitation to get her out.

**B. DB:** That is all very interesting, but it doesn't [Inaudible] the investigation a great deal. Now, is there anything else you wish to say to me about this at this stage?

**AP:** No. Hopefully, I've been fairly clear and detailed in the two letters. There are three aspects. It was his behaviour to staff in general, but it wasn't really the sexual issues that I was aware of at the time. It was all the other issues, his behaviour to me and his complete disdain for his constituents.

**DB:** I am sorry, there is one thing that I want to ask you about that I did not quite understand, if I can find it here. Thank you very much for that. What we will do now may take a little while. We will get a transcript of this prepared. We will send a copy to you and you can revise it.

**C. AP:** How long do you expect the investigation to take before conclusion?

**DB:** It is very hard to tell because there are a number of potential witnesses that we are having some difficulty making contact with at all. It depends.

**AP:** Are there any names that I might have phone numbers for that I can help you with?

**DB:** Jacquelyn is the principal one. We have listened to a number of others, and we are waiting to hear when they come back. We can contact you again if there are any.

**AP:** I will just double check. I am pretty sure that I don't have her mobile number on this. Is there anybody else?

**DB:** She is the only one at the moment. There may be others, depending on other inquiries we make.

- A.** **AP:** My overall impression about Basil is that he was in politics to get from it as opposed to give. He saw it as a means of satisfying other issues in his life. That's my impression. Because he was so disinterested in his constituents and constituency work, because he was so disinterested in policy development and because his behaviour to people was so undermining on a regular basis, I can't rationalise why he was in politics, except that it was a power thing. (Mobile phone interference)

**DB:** That is your view. In due course, we will let you have a transcript. It may be necessary to ask you to come in again to clear up anything that (mobile phone)

- B.** **AP:** You can contact me.

**DB:** That has been helpful. I will just remind you of the provisions of section 33 of the Act, which make it unlawful for you to disclose anything which has been said at this interview.

**AP:** I appreciate that it is a difficult job. Good luck with it. I understand that some of my evidence is corroborative and based on what other people have said. I am making the point that when a lot of people are saying the same thing, it becomes more compelling.

**DB:** OK. Thank you very much.

**AP:** We are not all telling fibs.



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Jamie Mackrell

**Date:** 2 December 2014

**Place:** Holiday Inn Hotel, [REDACTED]

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
Jamie Mackrell

**Time Started:** 12.52 pm

**Time Ended:** 13.23 pm

**A.**     **DB:** As I think I mentioned in the notice, I'm taking all the evidence in this case on oath.

**JM:** OK, yeah. Yeah.

**DB:** Are you content to swear an oath on the Bible, or would you prefer to make an affirmation?

**JM:** Yeah, I'll just make an affirmation or whatever, you know, I'm not a religious person.

**B.**     **DB:** Could you read the words of the witness affirmation?

**JM:** OK. I do solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**DB:** OK, that's the formal bit over.

**JM:** No problem.

**C.**     **DB:** Can I just, for the record, confirm that you've received a notice from me outlining the procedure and drawing attention to various offences?

**JM:** Yeah. I receive that notice, yeah.

**DB:** Do you understand that?

**JM:** Yeah. Yeah, I understand, yeah.

**DB:** Do you have any questions about it?

**JM:** No, it seems fair enough, you know.

**DB:** OK. Then, I think I asked you to bring with you a series of texts.

**A.**     **JM:** Yeah. Now, it's on my email chain here. Let me check. What I've done is I've starred the emails that I feel are important in this, mainly emails with Icon Creative. These are all the Icon emails here, and the ones that are starred are the ones that have, you know, the relevant bits of information in them. Now, you can — I will show you briefly here yourself, this here sort of goes back to December, whenever the invoices started coming in, and this is how long they were being chased up for these invoices. So, it's for two pieces of work. One's for leaflets that were done for an Assembly carol service, which we paid, and another was the £384, that leaflet for the work that, Basil's own leaflet, for that one. So, that was going right back to the 12<sup>th</sup> of December they were looking the invoices for that, and that ran right up to May. Sorry, 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2012, and that ran right up to May 2013, and the emails are all in there. You can see.

**B.**     **DB:** Is there any way you'd be able to print these off for me or forward them?

**JM:** Yeah, I can forward them. Absolutely no problem.

**DB:** That would save going through them now.

**JM:** Yeah, it's just that I have very little credit left in my printer in, erm, university. But, you can see here, there is one here that I found that I thought was quite, quite important. It's basically that Basil had no intention to pay right from the beginning. Erm, I'll find the email chain. Sorry about this here. It might be in here with Fiona. I, I can't find at the moment actually, but it's definitely, definitely in there, you know, there was — there's emails that went back between.

**C.**     There we go; this is it here. Yeah, so you can see there, you know, that's the email from Fiona; she was with Basil, she said, you know, "Basil. Basil doesn't want to pay." So, right from the off there, Basil didn't want to pay for any of the work that was going on. He never wanted to pay for anything.

**DB:** OK. If you're able to forward these to me or print them, whichever's easier for you. If there's a cost involved, I'll pick up the bill if you'll let me know what it is.

**JM:** Yeah, well I can — I mean, I could email them through pretty much as soon as I get back later on this afternoon. That wouldn't be a problem.

**A.**     **DB:** That would be perfect. Now, can I just try and put this in context. I've got the copy of the note of your interview with Carecall, which has proven very helpful. But just to, am I right you started working for Basil originally as a volunteer when he was in the UUP, and that would be back in April 2011?

**JM:** Yeah, it was just before the Assembly elections at that time.

**DB:** And then, a couple of months after that, you started working for him on a paid basis.

**JM:** Yeah.

**B.**     **DB:** For 16 hours a week.

**JM:** Yep, that's right.

**DB:** And you carried on working for him after he moved from the UUP and he was an independent for a short time and then he set up NI21. You carried on working with him until the middle of May 2013.

**JM:** Yeah, it would be about then. Yeah,

**DB:** And, in some paperwork, I've seen your job — your title's described as "Member support".

**C.**     **JM:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** Was that basically do whatever you have to do?

**JM:** Pretty much, yeah. I mean, that was the general mentality within the office. Basil would quite often say that people's roles are flexible, which, whenever you're sort of working in such a small team, you can completely understand that. Erm, you know, he would say, "It's not a 9-to-5 job." He would've expected us quite often to work over and above what we were paid for and that sort of thing too. But, it was very flexible; very flexible.

**DB:** Why did you come to leave in May of 2013?

**A. JM:** Erm, there were a few reasons. Erm, our — the relationship that I had with Basil had got very tense. A lot of it was because of the payments, em, on the leaflets and things. He'd embarrassed me in front of my family as well at a fundraiser that'd happened, which I was happy enough to go with, but Basil never really came out and sort of, you know, just put the whole thing to rest and just let it go like that there; it was always something that sort of dragged on. And also, I felt that he wanted me to do something that I didn't want to do and that I wasn't in to do in the first place. Like, whenever I tried to leave in around December time, I told him then I felt like a square peg in a round hole.

**DB:** Yeah.

**B. JM:** It was something along that line — those lines — I said anyway. He said, "No, no, no, it's fine." You know, by May, he said, "Listen, we should've been honest with each other". You know, so.

**DB:** Now, the, erm, the incident you've referred to about the fundraiser.

**JM:** Yeah.

**DB:** That was, er, in 2012.

**JM:** Yeah, that would've been, erm, October 2012. Around then.

**C. DB:** And that — that was a fundraiser at a cricket club hall.

**JM:** Yeah. Erm, the background — I mean do you want the background to that there? It's not very important.

**DB:** No, I mean, it's quite early in things and before the period that I'm particularly interested in. But it was after that — some months after that — that you, er — no, sorry. And you, putting it short, you felt you weren't given due recognition for all the work you'd done for it.

**JM:** Erm, yeah, I mean, there was that, and there was also that I was sort of — people had started the work, and I was left to finish what they'd started.



**A.** I would not have chosen that cricket club for a start. That was the — that was biggest mistake anyone could've made. And whenever you're trying to — whenever that there is the basis you're going on, like, you know it was never going to be successful. The only reason we got the numbers we did was because I dragged my family along and half of Lisburn Ulster Unionists, you know.

**DB:** Then, during the period you were working 16 hours a week, where were you based?

**JM:** Erm, it would've been in Stormont or Lisburn and maybe Dromore.

**B.** **DB:** OK, so would you be one day a week at Stormont or one at Lisburn or? Would it vary from week to week.

**JM:** Yeah, it would've varied. It would've varied; there wouldn't have been any set times. And obviously whenever the Assembly was on recess and things, we would've spent more time in Lisburn than up at Stormont. So, you know, it depended on what was going on.

**DB:** When you were at Stormont, at that time did Basil just have one office?

**JM:** Er, there was the Stormont office, there was Lisburn and there was Dromore.

**C.** **DB:** No, but in Stormont Parliament Buildings.

**JM:** In Parliament Buildings, yeah.

**DB:** So, you were working in the same office as him.

**JM:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** And who else worked in that office full time?

**JM:** Karen worked there. Fiona came on around the same time as I started.

**DB:** That was Fiona McAteer.

- A. **JM:** Yeah, Fiona started maybe three weeks after me. But yeah, it would've been mainly the three of us.

**DB:** And in general, what were relations in the office like?

**JM:** It was great. We worked as a really close-knit team, the three of us: me, Fiona and Karen. And Basil would come in and he would maybe ask us to do things, maybe take one of us off to do something with him. And in the beginning in particular, Basil was great. He was so charismatic, the public persona that people know him as, there was that.

- B. You know, he was, there was the odd sort of maybe he would've got a wee bit impatient and shouted, but it wasn't a big deal. It was just, you know, at that point, it hadn't really taken over him I think. You know, he was — he was a pretty positive fella. And obviously we were riding on the back of a wave with the election stuff too.

**DB:** And was that towards everyone that worked in the office? There were no obvious strains that you could see.

**JM:** It seemed to be. It seemed to be alright. Erm, he'd had a problem, there was a women who worked there, [REDACTED] and he was very frustrated with her, and I think once he ended her employment that he sort of was a wee bit happier about things there too.

- C. She might have been maybe — you know, he didn't seem to have much time for her. You know, I think their relationship didn't seem to be great, but once that was over things seemed to be fine.

**DB:** And then in erm — I'll just get my dates right here. In June of 2012, you became full time; 40 hours a week.

**JM:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** And, from then on, did your place of work stay the same or split between various offices?

A. **JM:** Again, various offices. Most times I would've been with Basil at Stormont or wherever he was. Quite often, that's where I would've been. Unless, there was maybe some meeting or whatever I had to do, then I would've gone off to different meetings. By and large, I was with Basil most of the time, and most of the time that was at Stormont.

**DB:** And you mentioned, er, Karen and that while you were working 16 hours a week relations seemed OK with Basil. Did that continue?

**JM:** Erm, I mean, it's hard to say where that stopped happening. I think, as things got worse with the Ulster Unionist Party, Basil got more frustrated and would've taken that frustration out on people in the office, and in particular it was Karen that seemed to be *[Inaudible.]* it.

B. So, you know, we were always trying to work out when the best way to leave the Ulster Unionists was. That was pretty much what was going on, like. You were either trying to work out how to take the party over or how to get out of the party, and whenever things didn't — weren't really going his way, I mean it must've been sort of — coming up to the December that year, things had been getting worse and worse and worse. Before the leadership attempt and things like that; Basil really wasn't happy about that too. And yeah, he would've — he would've taken a lot of it out on Karen. You know, if there was maybe something slightly wrong in his diary, then it was the biggest disaster in the world and Karen would've been the worst in the world for it.

C. **DB:** And just to explore that a little bit, was that — we've heard this morning about [REDACTED] and the way he allegedly treated his office staff, people have said they needed shin guards. But then, after the incident it was back to normal until the next incident. Was that pretty much how it was, or was he constantly berating Karen?

**JM:** It started off, it was, like I say, it was a gradual process. You know, between it just being every now and then things were fine, then it was more and more often and then it just got to the point where it was just all the time. I mean, Karen had to actually go off on leave over the whole thing. That was after I had left, Karen and I still spoke and stuff and she was very upset like.

**A.** **DB:** I'm interested in what you personally saw rather than what anyone's told you. I mean, when he was behaving in this way towards Karen did he shout?

**JM:** Oh yeah, he would've. Like, he would've really let go — really let loose on her, like. I mean there were times that he — he just, you know. The shouting was so loud that there were other people would've come in and would've said, "Listen, I'm sorry I've had to hear that." Other people in the Assembly would've heard him shouting, like; next-door neighbours and things. He was really really quite loud when he started getting going.

**B.** **DB:** And at that stage, was it [REDACTED] had a —

**JM:** [REDACTED] had an office next door, yeah.

**DB:** And, you say he shouted. Did he swear during this shouting?

**JM:** Yeah, yeah, he would've swore and everything, like. He would've, em, the way he would've done it he would've made you feel so little. He did it to me as well, he did it with Karen. Like I say, Karen, I felt, was the main focus of his anger quite often. Sometimes he would've done it with me, but a lot of the other time it was Karen. Whenever he did it in front of people too.

**C.** Like, sometimes he would've had people in for meetings in the office, and he still would've had a go a Karen or me or whoever like while he had someone in. Em, to me that is really unprofessional: you keep that stuff in your own office, if you are going to do it at all. I don't think you should be doing it at all. You shouldn't be treating people like that. But I, I mean, I felt like it was emotional abuse, like, you know, how he was treating her.

**DB:** Were you — do you remember Jacquelyn Nelgia ? No one is very clear how you pronounce her second name.

**JM:** Yeah, yeah, I know who you're talking about.

**DB:** Was she working in the office at the same time as you?

A. **JM:** Erm, I think she — she left, or she started just as I left. Around that time. She would've come over for the summer I think: I think she would come over for the summer, then Basil offered her a bit longer.

**DB:** So, did you witness anything untowards between her and Basil?

**JM:** Well, Jacqueline and I were quite close, so we would've spoken and stuff.

**DB:** Yeah, but did you actually see him?

**JM:** But I wouldn't have — I wouldn't have seen anything.

B. **DB:** And then, er, there was a gentleman Alan Patterson. Now, I think he wasn't actually employed, but he worked in the office from time to time. Did you see anything taking place or hear of anything taking place between Alan and Basil?

**JM:** I'd heard, there was a bit — again, I'd left by this stage.

**DB:** Oh right.

**JM:** Erm, I mean, I was — I was there when people like Alan Patterson were getting in touch, trying to keep him involved in stuff in the early days, because we were setting up the party at the stage so we needed people like Alan.

C. But I didn't have too close a relationship with him. I didn't have any sort of working relationship with him anyway.

**DB:** OK. And then what about Ashleigh Murray?

**JM:** Yeah, Ashleigh and I worked together for — there was an overlap of maybe a month or two, if even, you know.

**DB:** Now, during the time of this overlap, did you see or hear anything you thought unusual or untoward between Ashleigh and Basil?

**A.**     **JM:** Yeah, er, I would've spent a lot of time with the two of them together. Well, I say "a lot of time"; there were maybe three or four times in particular I can think of. There was a time at Basil's house, there was a wee coffee shop and then the time that I left. And it was just — I never saw anything that would've been, you know, that would've been sort of clear cut, but, you know, you can sort of tell whenever people have a bit of a relationship, whenever it's not just a working relationship, that sort of thing. You could tell just, you know, the way they spoke to each other, just wee things like that, erm —

**DB:** Did you think they were having an affair?

**B.**     **JM:** Yeah, I definitely did, like. Erm, you know, this is going to sound daft like, but, we were sitting in the office and Ashleigh gave off to Basil about something like Basil had went and got Cokes or something like that there — Coca-Cola — and there was just like this here wee sort of thing a wee back and forth between them about not sharing the Coca-Cola. You know, it may not sound like very much, but whenever you have a bit of background, you sort of think, "Well, I know what the craic is with the two of them." And, you know, he was picking her up every day in the morning and taking her home every evening at night. Even just like — again, this is going to sound like nothing, but whenever you put it all together, it sort of builds a bigger picture, like —

**C.**     There was one day we came into the office later on in the evening or maybe it was the next day or whatever, and the blinds were closed down. That never happened; we never would've closed the blinds in our place, and the two of them were late the night before and stuff.

**DB:** Which office was that?

**JM:** This was in the Stormont office.

**DB:** Oh, the Stormont office. OK. Then, I think, er, you'd left, and were you back in, er, in Northern Ireland in was it October or the autumn of 2013?

**JM:** Yeah, it would've been the time of the NI21 launch.

**A.** **DB:** And did you make contact with Ashleigh at once stage?

**JM:** Yeah, Ashleigh and I spoke then.

**DB:** And did she confide in you about any relationship with Basil?

**JM:** She told me that she and Basil had been having an affair. And, you know, there was — there were a few of us there at the time, like; I mean, Jacquelyn was with us and stuff. We'd gone for a night out and a few drinks in Lavery's I think it was, and Jacquelyn had told me about that. Now, like, to be honest, I never really trusted Ashleigh too much.

**B.** I think that Ashleigh had said to Basil I was leaving to go to university. Erm, I'm quite, quite sure it was Ashleigh that had said it, cause everyone else knew for months and months and months and hadn't said, then Ashleigh knew and Basil found out the next day, like. So, I never really trusted Ashleigh, and to tell you the truth, I can never be quite sure whether Basil was taking advantage of Ashleigh or Ashleigh was taking advantage of Basil. So, I just wouldn't be too sure of that.

**DB:** And what did she tell you? Did she go into any detail about how long this affair had been going on?

**C.** **JM:** No, well, I mean I can't really remember myself. Like I say, we'd been having a few drinks, so I wouldn't trust my memory at that time completely. I know that she said it was going on and she said that it was a sexual thing, but she didn't — if she did tell me details, I can't remember the details.

**DB:** Then, can I come to this apparent attempt to obtain funds.

**JM:** Yeah.

**DB:** Was this at the time when you changed from working 16 hours to 40 hours?

**JM:** Yeah, yeah.



A. **DB:** And just tell me what, as best you can remember, what Basil said to you.

**JM:** The arrangement that Basil wanted was, erm, it would've been, erm, I would've got paid for 40 hours a week, but I would've had a pay rise of a pound an hour extra as well with that. So, I was going from £6.08 an hour, minimum wage, to £7.08 an hour. Now, what Basil wanted was for the pound extra per hour to go to him. So, I think I said it was 177 quid or something, but I think with tax taken into it, it was maybe around 140 quid a month he was looking off me. Now, what he was looking was that to be put into like a separate account and then, say we were out of whatever, and he had to buy a round of drinks or something or he was buying someone lunch at the Assembly, he would've wanted me to pay for that.

B. Now, that might've only happened three or four times maybe. Maybe, I think, you know, it was mainly lunches in the Members' dining room, but there was never any cash that I gave him. By the end of, you know the, whenever I was leaving Basil late in May, erm, so he said, "Listen, you owe me £900". And I'd spent the money, like, you know. I was, like I was having to travel out to Dromore, Lisburn and driving all round the constituency canvassing and stuff, and by the end of it to Basil I was basically I was just a paid canvasser; you know, our relationship had broken down that much. I couldn't afford the diesel or the petrol to get all round Lisburn, driving about and handing out leaflets and talking to people, like. I didn't see it as that big a deal for me to take that 900 quid off him in the end. The extra work I was doing, I wasn't getting any sort of expenses myself. He was getting all sorts of expenses.

C. **DB:** Can I just make sure I'm understanding this correctly. So, your actual pay rise was to be a pound an hour and you were moving from 16 hours to 40 hours at the same time.

**JM:** Yeah.

**DB:** And was all the increase going to go into this separate account?

**JM:** It never went in; it never went into any other account.

**DB:** Was that the idea?

**JM:** That was the idea.



- A. DB: So, effectively, the intention was that you would continue to get the minimum wage and that the surplus, if you like, for the 40 hours would be held separately and then Basil would come to you where he needed expenses, and you would pay it or pay him to refund it.

JM: Yeah.

DB: And did that ever happen?

JM: As I say, maybe about three or four times, mainly in the Members' dining room there was, or in the bar or whatever if there was a round of teas and coffees and things.

- B. I remember there were a few times I was a bit skint, like, and Basil would've said to me, "You know, you're supposed to be getting these here. You know, we've got this arrangement, and you're supposed to be getting these teas and coffees in." I was skint, like, and had no money.

DB: I mean, this was a way of getting round the rules for office cost expenditure.

JM: It was completely, yeah.

DB: It was fraud, wasn't it?

- C. JM: I would definitely say that it was fraud. It was abuse of the expenses system. Erm, we can see though that the expenses system is completely open to abuse from all sorts of channels; you know, everyone seems to be at it. And the mentality we had in the office was we knew everyone was at it; we knew all the other parties were doing this sort of thing, and we were in a constituency where there were four DUP MLAs plus a DUP MP. There's that collect — all of those collecting resources. They held most of the council, and we had to do pretty much what we could. You know, we were trying to build, you know, we had to survive as well; the DUP would've swamped us. And, I mean I, personally speaking, I think that's a big problem; the way a party can amass huge resources like that. I mean, surely there should be some way to save them getting out of hand that they could've share an office and reduced the cost — the collective costs and things.

A. DB: This would be a very inefficient way of getting money out of the system. For example, you were going to have to pay national insurance and tax on it.

JM: Exactly. Exactly, yeah.

DB: Whereas, you could just have put in — someone wanting to extract money from the system could've put in an invoice for research for example and got the whole of it.

JM: Yeah, true. But I suppose, you know, if that, I mean you can see that on your expenses sheet whenever the journalists or whatever are going through at the end of the year.

B. You know, we've seen how many MLAs get stinged for that or get stung for that sort of thing? [REDACTED] It happens quite often, so this was a way of trying to keep it, keep it hidden. I mean I, that's my thinking on it anyway; that it was trying to keep it [Inaudible.]

DB: And why did Basil pick you for this arrangement when relations you said were —

JM: At that point, relations weren't bad at all. Things were going quite well. Basil and I were very, very close. You know, he would've — I mean, sometimes I think there was a bit of grooming involved too, like. He wanted — he wanted for me to do things for him that I might not necessarily want to do.

C. I think there was a bit of grooming involved, like. But, he would've said to people, like, "Jamie is like a son to me" and stuff, and, you know, he would've taken me out and got me dinner and things. Basil and I had a pretty close relationship. Like, we went to Milwaukee and stuff together.

DB: When Basil discussed this with you, the proposal, how did you react to it? Did you say, "No, I'm not getting involved in that. It's not proper", or did you go along with it at the time?

A. JM: Well, yeah, I mean I wasn't too sure but I went along with it because I was, you know, as I say, the thinking just was that all the rest of them are doing it, we're so small compared to them as it is, so we need to try and do something to actually protect ourselves and to grow as well. You know, and it's very, very hard — hard to do that whenever all the other parties have such huge resources.

DB: And you said that, well I don't suppose there are any written records of money you paid out?

JM: I don't think there would be.

B. DB: I think you said that two or three times he asked you for money and you paid it out.

JM: Yeah, maybe. You know, it wouldn't have been any more than about half a dozen *[Inaudible.]*

DB: And, could we put a rough estimate on the amount of money then that went back to Basil as a result of this scheme?

JM: Erm, 60, 70 quid maybe. Erm, that would've been about it, like.

DB: In total?

C. JM: Yeah, I mean if you think about it, it's a few lunches and a couple of rounds of teas and coffees.

DB: Then, can I just come to this Icon Services.

JM: Yeah.

DB: In the end of the day, you signed a letter agreeing to pay £384 or £185.

JM: Yeah.

DB: Did you ever actually pay that?

A. JM: I did, yeah. I did.

DB: Am I right in thinking that Basil basically said that he'd never authorised the work. That was his line.

JM: That was what he said, yeah.

DB: And so it was down to you.

JM: Yeah.

DB: When you left, erm, you were paid holiday pay. Was that paid through the Assembly payroll, or did Basil pay it separately?

B. JM: That was through the Assembly payroll. I mean, that was holiday money I was owed, like. I never took holidays. I got maybe a week off at, em, Christmas time, but apart from that I never took very many holidays. I would've worked — quite often I would've been working six days a week.

DB: So, this is the sort of paying out for holidays that you were unable to take.

JM: Yeah, this is money I was owed, like. You know, I'm really serious about that: that was money that I would've been owed.

C. DB: But, you see, I was looking at your contract with the Assembly, and you weren't actually entitled to that.

JM: Right, OK. I didn't realise that now.

DB: Let me see if I can find the bit of paper here. Bear with me; I saw it *[Inaudible.]* Yeah, the document I'm looking at is your Standards of Particulars under the Employment Rights Order that was issued on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011.

JM: Yeah.

**A.**     **DB:** You see, when we come over to the, eh, it says, "You will not be entitled to be paid in respect of holidays accrued but untaken as of the date of termination of your employment."

**JM:** Right, OK. I didn't realise that, now. That's, yeah, that's fair enough, yeah.

**DB:** So, although you agreed to pay this £185 pounds, for some reason you appear to have got paid for untaken leave that you had no legal entitlement to.

**JM:** Yeah, well.

**B.**     **DB:** Assuming that wasn't change at a later date.

**JM:** No, I mean, I'd imagine it probably wasn't. I would sort of wonder, though, surely under employment law there's no way that contract can be like that. Surely, that can't happen unless I was maybe employed under some sort of self-employed basis. Erm, if you're away out — I mean, a lot of the work I do now is about workers' rights and things like that. That's the sort of journalism I'm into now, and as far as I would be aware that should not be allowed.

**DB:** Well, I understand it's a standard Assembly contract that's offered to all MLAs, and you've the choice at that last box of deleting that bit or not. I wouldn't claim to have any expertise in that area.

**C.**     **JM:** Yeah, yeah.

**DB:** That's very helpful. Mr McCrea's management style has been described to me as being very robust; someone who didn't suffer fools gladly.

**JM:** Well, I suppose, yeah. He was very disorganised, and I think quite often he would've taken that out on other people. I think that was a lot of what it was really, like. I think that really what happens is, once people get into that atmosphere it consumes them. I mean, I felt it did that to me.

**DB:** And I suppose the whole period, deteriorating relationships within the UUP, the election and then the planning for setting up the new party, the setting up must've been a very stressful time for everyone involved.

**A. JM:** Yeah, I mean, it was pretty stressful, but there were huge ups and downs with the thing. You know, there was this freedom that all of a sudden we had; we were free from the Ulster Unionists where we didn't have that baggage and we could go on and do what we wanted to do. There was a real buzz and there was an excitement around a lot of the people we were talking to. People were really, really annoyed about things, especially with the flag protests and that sort of thing. So, people were really looking at us quite positively. There was a lot of good coming from it in that way, but obviously it was the organisational stuff. There was no one in the office that was really able to pull people together and organise stuff. Basil was able to pull people together, but he didn't have the organisational skills himself. I think that was what one of the big problems was. There was always something that was maybe slightly more pressing. You weren't looking far enough ahead.

**B. DB:** That's been incredibly helpful to me. Is there anything else you think I should be aware of?

**JM:** Well, just like I was saying, I mean, I think really, I think that Basil probably isn't as bad a person as people make out. I think the whole system corrupts people, to be honest with you, and I saw that happen with Basil. That's not to say that what he did was excusable. A lot of the allegations are ????? are not excusable, but the way he treated me wasn't excusable. I actually think that I suffered a bit of a breakdown after the whole thing [*Inaudible.*] So, you know, I don't think it's excusable some of the things he did, but I do think that part of it is that the Assembly sets you up to get on like that.

**C. DB:** So, it's understandable but not excusable.

**JM:** Yeah, exactly. I mean, the whole thing needs to be changed, like. The whole system at the Assembly needs to be changed because it's a mask for all sorts of corruption that goes on. Like, I'm doing other investigative work at the moment where I'm looking at other things, and you know the expenses is just at the top of a chain, you know. There's all sort of corruption. Once people are looking at the expenses, what's the bill for the Members? Something like 12 million or something like that there. And then you've got to think about the amount of money that they're in charge of behind that. The 12, that's nothing like compared to the amount of money they've got.

**A.** And also, you know, again, because that's part of it too, you know the expenses and the money. Again, that's all part of the culture that needs to be changed, I think. I think there's just — people just see it as their money; it's something they can unlock.

**DB:** OK. Well, thank you very much. The time is now 1.23 pm, and we'll terminate this interview if I can remember how to turn this off.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Ashleigh Murray

**Date:** 13 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Ashleigh Murray  
[REDACTED] Holmes and Moffitt, Solicitors

**Time Started:** 14.27 pm

**Time Ended:** 15.32 pm



A. **DB:** Thank you for coming to see me. As you'll see, this interview is being tape recorded, and this is the first interview of Ashleigh Murray in connection with her complaint against Basil McCrea MLA. It is taking place in room 283 in Parliament Buildings on 13 November. The time is now 2.27. Present are Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner; [REDACTED] the note-taker.

**AM:** Ashleigh Murray.

**DB:** Ashleigh Murray.

[REDACTED] And [REDACTED] solicitor at Holmes and Moffitt.

B. **DB:** Thank you. And you are representing Ashleigh Murray.

[REDACTED]: I am indeed.

**DB:** Now, as I indicated in the notice, I have decided that, in this investigation, all evidence will be taken on oath. Are you content to take an oath or if you prefer to make an affirmation?

[REDACTED]: Oath.

C. **AM:** Oath.

**DB:** Will you take the Book in your right hand and read the words of the oath on the card?

**AM:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**DB:** Thank you very much. Can you just confirm that you have received from me, through your solicitor, a note outlining the procedure for the investigation and drawing your attention to the offences in connection with attendance at the interview?

D. **AM:** I have, yes.

**DB:** And have you any questions on that?

**AM:** No.

**DB:** Now, I will ask you a series of questions, focusing on the three issues that were set out in the notice. The other matters raised in your complaint will be dealt with at later interviews. If you don't understand any question — if you don't understand what I'm getting at — please just say so and I'll try and rephrase the question. Your solicitor cannot, of course, answer any question on your behalf. I appreciate that you may find some parts of the interview distressing. If at any stage you wish a break in the interview, please just say so, and we can break for a few minutes until you gather your thoughts.

E. Are you ready for me to start?

**AM:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. Just so as I can try and get my head round the background to this, tell me if this is wrong, you started work at Stormont as a volunteer.

**AM:** I did, yeah.

**DB:** And then in July, I think, of 2013, you took up paid employment in Lisburn.

A. **AM:** Yeah, I think the first payment came at the start of August, but this is where complications come in.

**DB:** We'll come to that.

And you worked in a paid capacity then until the 1 November of 2013.

**AM:** Yeah.

**DB:** And, at any time before you went to Lisburn, did you receive any pay from your work?

B. **AM:** The only pay I received was a day I had approached Basil and told him that I was struggling with money because I was on jobseeker's, which was about £50 a week. He wanted me to work about 60 hours a week, so I couldn't really afford lunches and things, so I had approached him, as I say, about that, and he gave me £25 in my hand. And then five days later, asked me how the £25 was holding up. And that was it.

**DB:** Well, we'll perhaps return to that.

C. Now, in the notice, I asked you to produce some documents. The first call was for documents in your custody or under your control tending to support the allegations made in paragraph 21 of your statement of complaint.

Identify what that document is.

**AM:** That's the 'Sunday Life' article that he put in.

**DB:** That's very helpful. You're giving me a photocopy of an article in the 'Sunday Life' of 25 May 2014.

**AM:** I am, yeah.

D. **DB:** Thank you very much.

And I have the original paper here. Not that the copy isn't good.

**DB:** No, it just makes it much easier for me to find the various things.

And the second call was for the original of the photograph referred to in paragraph 19 of your statement.

**AM:** A screenshot of his computer.

**DB:** Right.

E. **AM:** Of information that —

**DB:** That's helpful. It's just the —

**AM:** It's labelled on the back as well.

**DB:** The photocopy was not entirely clear. Thank you for producing these.

Now then, can I come to the first issue I want to deal with today, which is the circumstances surrounding the making of your complaint. Can I ask you first of all why you've made this complaint?

- A. **AM:** I made this complaint because I left work for Mr McCrea in November of 2013 due to lack of structure within the workplace, through lack of – sorry - through some standard office work, through blatant bullying and harassment. So I left. Granted, I would have come back if circumstances had of changed and I would've been able to work for John McCallister as his employee, cause I loved the party and everything that it stood for.

So I left. Shortly after I left, I received a message from Jacquelyn Neglia, which is that photograph there, saying, "did you know that Basil was keeping information on you?" I was shocked at this. I was then hearing that he thought I was going to the media. Apparently some girls were coming out and they were going to be saying stuff about him and allegations about him. And I was getting this information through [REDACTED]. So I wanted to come forward, too. So I didn't know where to turn. I didn't trust John McCallister at that point because he was best friends with Basil, as far as I was concerned, so I went to the 'Newsletter' and spoke to [REDACTED]. I told him, and he put the allegations to Basil.

- B. **DB:** Can I just ask you then in relation to that, first of all just so as we're clear for the transcript, when you referred to that photograph, you are referring to the photograph you handed over to me in response to the notice. Thank you.

**AM:** Yes.

**DB:** I mean, my understanding is that you didn't want to have a great deal of publicity about this.

**AM:** No.

**DB:** So going to [REDACTED], a well-known journalist, seems a rather curious choice of a person to go to complain.

- C. **AM:** I wanted Basil to know that he wasn't getting away with it anymore. Once I had left, I got that photograph that you just referred to. I also got an email that was confirmed that he tried to have somebody to follow me – Neil McNickle – that, while I was still working for him, he wanted him to show up at my house and follow me to work to make sure I was going to work on time. These are the final straws for me. I wanted to walk away. I wanted to do nothing. I was being accused. I have also sent a text message to Basil and [REDACTED] letting them know that I would take action against defamation of my character because they were saying things about me. So I went to him. I did want to scare him, to let him know that I wasn't going to take this. Like you know what I mean, I didn't want it published. I just wanted him to know that he wasn't going to get away with it, and that was it.

- D. **DB:** And, eh –

**AM:** And I did ask to speak to John McCallister, and I met with John McCallister the next day and told him.

**DB:** Now, your meeting with [REDACTED] as I understand it, was in late April or early May 2014

- E. **AM:** Early May, yeah.

**DB:** That was six months or more after you had left.

**AM:** Yeah.

**DB:** Why did it take six months for you to reach that decision to –

A. **AM:** Because I didn't want anything to do with him. I was still friends with people from the party, from the youth group. I would go out with Jacquelyn and people into Belfast. She was telling me about the sort of treatment that she was receiving. It was just ongoing and it just couldn't go any further. And then [REDACTED] contacted me, and he was saying that he had other girls, and I was like, oh my God, there's more girls, what is going on here. So I had to come forward. Nobody else was going to do it, and then, once I spoke to [REDACTED] he gave a solicitor's letter stating that I was mentally unwell and everything I said was unreliable.

B. **DB:** Well, we'll come to that in just a moment, but I just want to be clear about what was the, if you like, the straw that broke the camel's back? There must have been some event that prompted you, six months after you'd stopped being employed by Mr McCrea, to go to [REDACTED] rather than doing it three months after or nine months after.

**AM:** I was sick of hearing that it was me. I was hearing through the grapevine, through friends, that were saying and joking, oh at you going to the media. I was hearing that Basil was accusing me and was saying that it was my fault, and all this. It was nothing to do with me. I was not involved in any of this, shape or form.

**DB:** But was there no specific event then that triggered you to go?

**AM:** No, just an accumulation. He had harassed me to the point that that was it.

C. **DB:** OK. Then, eh, there was then a further delay until September, another, we are talking about, four months before you made a complaint to me. What was the reason for that?

**AM:** There was no delay. We tried to undergo the Carecall process, which was an absolute shambles from the get-go. It was disgusting the way things were handled. I went down. Everybody gave their statement, and then Basil was given a copy of the statements. The executives didn't –

**DB:** Who told you that?

D. **AM:** Carecall. It was their procedure. They give him a copy of the statement so he can rebut.

**DB:** I just want to be clear about this because it is important. What is the name of the person who told you that they had given Mr McCrea a copy of the statement?

**AM:** [REDACTED] somebody. I don't know. The person who interviewed me.

**DB:** Right.

E. **AM:** So he's been aware of this from the very beginning but yet he's been telling everybody he hasn't a clue.

**DB:** And you are quite clear that Carecall told you –

**AM:** 100%. He knows –

**DB:** That they had given Mr McCrea a copy of the statement.

**AM:** Yeah.

**DB:** You are quite sure about that.

**AM:** Yeah.

A. **DB:** And do you remember when they told you that?

**AM:** Whenever I was being interviewed, I asked what the next step was. They said that the allegations would be put to Basil, that he would know and it would give him time to rebut. He was given the allegations, and then the whole process was shut down.

**DB:** No. I do caution you, because you are on oath, to be very careful and listen to the questions, which are deliberately –

B. **AM:** Yes, but it is my knowledge that –

**DB:** Now, just hear me out. I asked you very clearly and emphasised it: who in Carecall told you that a copy of your statement had been given to Mr McCrea? What you are now telling me is not that they ever said that a copy of your statement had been given to Mr McCrea but that, when you were giving your interview, they said that the next stage in the process was that a copy of your statement would be given to Mr McCrea. There is a very important difference between the two. So please listen very carefully to the questions.

**AM:** Am I allowed to look at my phone?

C. **DB:** If that will assist you, by all means.

**AM:** I am just trying to see if I have any notes on file that might be of assistance.

**AM:** Can I come back to you on that when that loads up?

**DB:** By all means. Is there any reason why you could not have made your complaint at the latest in November 2013? That is, as soon as you left employment with Mr McCrea.

D. **AM:** What was the question?

**DB:** Is there any reason why you could not have made your complaint at the latest in November 2013 when you left employment with Mr McCrea?

**AM:** No.

**DB:** OK. Have you - your complaint is about the conduct of Mr McCrea when you were employed by him.

**AM:** Yeah.

E. **DB:** Or working as a volunteer with him, to be right. Have you considered taking industrial tribunal proceedings against Mr McCrea?

**AM:** No.

**DB:** Why? You've had the benefit of legal advice. Has your solicitor not raised with you the question of the industrial tribunal proceedings? I am not asking what advice she has given you, which would be improper.

**AM:** Well I think that might be interpreted as what you are asking her.

**DB:** I am asking have you had advice on your right to take –

**AM:** I don't see the relevance of that, insofar as she is here to deal with your questions in relation to this investigation and not any other investigation.

- A. DB: Well, that will be recorded, but the question remains. Have you had advice from anyone about your right to take industrial tribunal proceedings in respect of the conduct, which you now complain to me?

█ Again, it's not relevant to this investigation.

DB: Nevertheless, the question remains, and it is for your client to answer.

AM: It's not relevant to this investigation.

DB: You understand the consequences of failing, without reasonable excuse, to answer the question?

- B. █ With respect, I don't really see what relevance it has to this particular investigation.

DB: I am satisfied that it is relevant, and that is my ruling on the matter. You may wish to advise your client on whether or not she could answer it, bearing in mind the consequences of failing, without reasonable excuse, to answer.

AM: I have taken relevant advice on all matters.

DB: And you have not taken any industrial tribunal proceedings.

AM: No.

- C. DB: Thank you. Now, can we come to the, I think it was the third, of the issues listed on the notice? The alleged attempts by Mr McCrea to blacken your name. I just want to try and get the timescale of events clear in my mind. Perhaps I can just refresh my memory from what you've said in your statement. I think we are looking at paragraph 21 of the document that is now AM2. And what you say is that, since the allegations came to light – and that was following your meeting with █ – Mr McCrea has attempted to blacken your name through use of the media. Am I right in thinking that, after you met with █ and, I think, Mr McCallister was present, █ wrote to or contacted Mr McCrea and, as a result of that, received a solicitor's letter from Mr McCrea's solicitors.

AM: Yeah.

- D. DB: So that was nothing to do with the media.

AM: How is it not?

DB: Well, he –

AM: He gave it to the media. How's it not to do with the media?

DB: Well, who gave it to the media?

- E. AM: Him and his solicitor. Basil and his solicitor gave it to the media.

DB: I see. And, em, you then, as I understand it, did a BBC interview.

AM: After, yeah.

DB: Yeah.

AM: I didn't contact them. I was contacted and asked.



A. DB: Yeah. And you in that confirmed, amongst other things, that allegations had been made against Mr McCrea.

AM: Yeah.

DB: Just so that, to make it easier for me to find, was that radio or TV?

AM: TV.

DB: Do you remember what programme it was broadcast on?

AM: BBC 'Newsline'.

B. DB: 'Newsline'. The one after the six o'clock news.

AM: Yeah, I think so.

DB: OK, it is just to try and find it. And it was after that that Mr McCrea appeared on 'The View', I think the programme is called, is that right?

AM: Saying that he knew nothing of it.

DB: So you were in fact the first person that had given a TV interview about this.

C. AM: Yes.

DB: And, eh, I mean, it might be suggested to you that, by appearing on 'The View', Mr McCrea was simply exercising his right to respond to allegations that you had made.

AM: I'm not worried about 'The View'. I'm not talking about 'The View'.

DB: Yeah, that may be interesting, but the question is –

AM: But I didn't raise 'The View' in the programme. You did and you have continued to speak about it. I haven't mentioned 'The View'. I'm not annoyed about that so it doesn't matter. It's not in my allegation. It's not in my complaint.

D. DB: Well, I'm sorry, it is.

AM: No, it's not.

DB: Well, let me refer to you about six lines from the bottom of paragraph 21. "After the BBC interview was released on the Friday evening, Mr McCrea" – sorry, it is the line before –

AM: I don't have a problem with him going onto it –

E. DB: *Inaudible*.

AM: Oh no, I'll read it.

■ Sorry, go on.

DB: "After this, I did an interview with the BBC, confirming there were allegations being put to Mr McCrea. Mr McCrea has continuously lied throughout this process. He had the allegations put to him by the 'Newsletter' and went straight to 'The View' and lied that he knew nothing about these allegations." So you have based your complaint, in part, about 'The View'.

- A. **AM:** But not in the fact that he went to blacken my name. He went onto 'The View' and he lied about not knowing anything of the allegations, but 20 minutes before, he was in the 'Newsletter' office getting them put to him. That is what I am trying to make out in that.

**DB:** So, what, how do you say Mr McCrea blackened your name with the use of the media, so that I am quite clear of what exactly your allegation is?

**AM:** He –

**DB:** First of all, start – did he do anything on TV that blackened your name?

- B. **[REDACTED]:** Can you recall?

**AM:** Can we step outside a minute?

**[REDACTED]:** Yes, certainly. Could we suspend?

**DB:** I am prepared to accede to that request.

### **Interview suspended at 2.47.**

- C. **DB:** 2.49.

**[REDACTED]:** Thank you for that suspension. Obviously my client is feeling very distressed by this, and I have to say that, if she doesn't feel able to continue, we may have to suspend it further.

**DB:** By all means.

**[REDACTED]:** Thank you.

- D. **DB:** I have no difficulty with that. We can take as many different days to do this as –

**[REDACTED]:** That's perfect.

**DB:** Now I think the question I was asking before the adjournment was: did Mr McCrea use the TV in any way in an attempt to blacken your name?

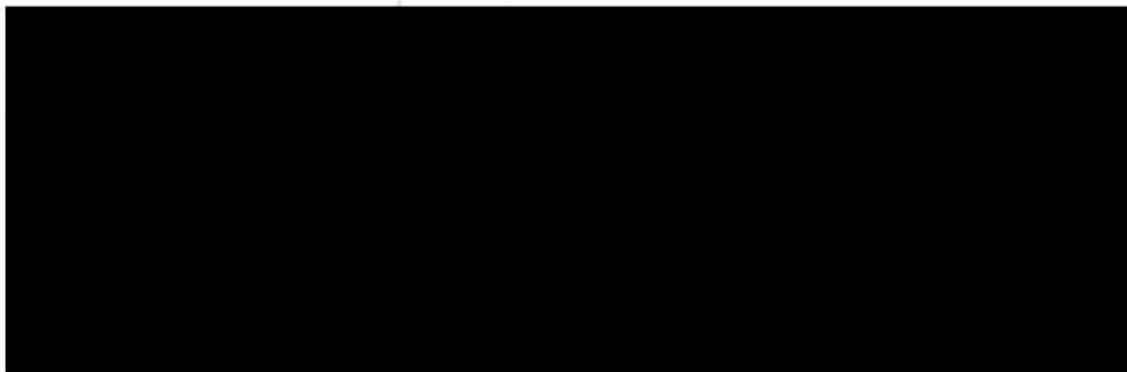
- E. **AM:** No. Once I had went to [REDACTED] at the 'Newsletter', he sent the letter stating that I was mentally unwell and everything I said was unreliable. That may be nothing to you, but who is he to say that I am mentally unwell? He is not a registered psychiatrist. He knows nothing of my mental health history. He knows nothing of my health history. So who is he to say that? How dare he? OK. And how dare anybody say that that's acceptable? Because it's not. After that, he then went to 'The View' and he lied and said that he knew nothing of these allegations, but 20 minutes before it – I have confirmed this; you can do it yourself – I have confirmed that he knew what was put to him and he lied and said, oh no, there was nothing. You can look it up for yourself. He then contacted the 'Irish News'. I had somebody in contact with me.



## Transcript Ashleigh Murray 13 November 2014

Pages 9, 10 and 11 were redacted by the Committee.

A.



**DB:** Thank you. Now can we come to the question of alleged financial impropriety and irregularities by Mr McCrea?

B. **AM:** That doesn't matter. It's just going to be passed off as nothing.

**DB:** I'm sorry, I didn't catch that.

**AM:** It doesn't matter. It'll probably be passed off as nothing, as all this is.

**DB:** Well, it is a matter for you if you don't wish to pursue this part of your complaint, that is a matter entirely for you, but I would be keen to investigate any allegations you want to make.

**AM:** Oh I'm sure.

**DB:** Do you wish to continue?

C. **AM:** I'm going to have to, aren't I? I don't have a choice.

**DB:** You do. I am perfectly content to suspend this now if you –

**AM:** No. I want it over. I don't want anything to do with this whole thing. From the moment I met Basil McCrea, he has destroyed me, piece by piece. You don't understand, so just ask your questions, get it over and done with, because I am at the end of my tether.

**DB:** As I explained, we are only dealing with this financial part today. We will need at least one more interview to deal with the other allegations once I have made further inquiry into them.

D. Now, in your statement of complaint, paragraph 18, you set out – *inaudible* – improper use of the office cost expenditure allowance. I'd like to ask you a number of questions about that just so that I can help me to further investigate it.

Do I understand from what you've written here this was while you were at the Lisburn office?

**AM:** Yes.

**DB:** So that's sometime after July 2013.

E. **AM:** Yes.

**DB:** Do you remember roughly when it was? I ask that so that –

**AM:** About September.

**DB:** By September time. OK, that is very helpful. And when you say you went – and you recall this because you went personally to collect it from the store – was this a Assembly stationery store?

- A. AM: It was, yes.
- DB: OK. And what was it you actually collected from the Assembly stationery store?
- AM: Assembly headed paper and Assembly envelopes.
- DB: And were these prepaid envelopes?
- AM: Yes.
- DB: Do you remember if they were first class or second class?
- AM: First class.
- B. DB: It just makes it easier to identify them.
- AM: They were hundreds of pounds worth.
- DB: OK. And when you went to collect this, were these the only items you collected or was it part of a much bigger stationery order?
- AM: Yeah, we were - No, it was just the paper cos we were doing a - We were doing something where they were sending things out to members of the party and there was about 300 of them to be sent out, so it was just the paper and the envelopes.
- C. DB: Am I right that it would have been normal practice for either the Lisburn office or perhaps all the offices and it was combined into a monthly or two-monthly stationery order, covering all sorts of things.
- AM: Yeah, they had an allowance and they had money left on it and they needed to use it.
- DB: But this was separate from your normal routine order, was it?
- AM: From what I could gather, yeah. You wouldn't go down and order - I had never seen them order 300 envelopes and 300 headed paper.
- D. DB: OK. And you describe it in paragraph 18 as it was print out invites and invitations. Do you remember what they were invitations to?
- AM: In what paragraph, sorry?
- █ 18.
- DB: In paragraph 18, about halfway down, fourth line down.
- AM: Yeah, it was for the members of the party. I can't remember what it was for specifically, but it was to go out to the potential members and people who were recently signed up to NI21.
- E. DB: OK. And I understand that you drew to Mr McCrea's attention that you didn't think he could use the -
- AM: Everybody did, it wasn't just myself that drew it to his attention. Karen Tabahe and Fiona: they all let him know that he wasn't allowed to do it.
- DB: When you drew it to his attention, what did he say?

A. **AM:** He didn't care. He just – he does a big hand thing. He just tells you to do it, and you do what you are told. And then, a couple of hours later, he had a change of mind, and after me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had all printed them out and put them in envelopes and handwrit the names and the addresses on them, he decided that he didn't want to do it anymore, so they were all thrown out. I had a box like that overflowing.

[REDACTED]: You are pointing to a –

**AM:** A black file box. I had a box like that overflowing with them.

B. **DB:** It may just be an omission, but there is no mention in paragraph 18 of this plan to misuse office cost expenditure not actually having been followed through.

**AM:** What do you mean?

**DB:** Well he didn't actually send the invitations.

**AM:** So just because he went and he bought them and he put everything out with the intent of doing it, up until the point somebody actually had to convince him, hours later, that that's still OK.

**DB:** Well, no –

**AM:** He wasted that amount of money.

C. **DB:** There's a big difference between murdering someone and attempting to murder them, for example.

[REDACTED]: She's cooperating with your questions and she is now broadening what she's advising –

**DB:** Well I accept that. I just find it rather strange that that wasn't made clear. I think most people reading paragraph 18 would assume that it had been carried through.

**AM:** That doesn't matter. He done what he done. Whether he sent it out or not, he still with the intent and he printed them out, and I sat with the frigging lumps on my fingers writing them all out for hours for nearly nine hours. So he still done it. It doesn't take away from the fact that he done it.

D. **DB:** And then, in your view, this was clearly in breach of the Assembly rules.

**AM:** As far as I knew, yes, from what everybody else was saying, but he got their backs up and said that he wasn't allowed to do it and really annoyed at him.

**DB:** And indeed, it was potentially criminal wasn't it? It was attempting to obtain –

**AM:** Is that sarcasm?

**DB:** No. It was attempting to obtain money from the Assembly Commission falsely, and that would be fraud.

E. [REDACTED]: My client's not in a position to comment about that.

**DB:** Well who did you list this serious wrongdoing? What action did you take? Being aware of it.

**AM:** What am I meant to do?

**DB:** Well complain to – *inaudible* – there is a whistleblowing policy in the Assembly.

- A. **AM:** Oh yeah, really. Are you joking? Are you actually joking?
- █:** Well let's just be clear. Why – the question is why did you not do anything? Explain why you didn't do anything at the time.
- AM:** What am I meant to do? Look where I'm sitting today. No harm to you – I don't even know what to call you. Sir? But your line of questioning is shocking. I was coming up here for a hard time, but the bias is oozing out of you. It is unbelievable. You don't look at me. When I'm speaking, you roll your eyes, you look away. You don't look at me when you're talking to me some times. You look at Siobhan, even though you're telling me to answer the question. This whole thing, this is a fucking –
- █:** Ah, ah, ah.
- B. **AM:** Excuse my language. This is unbelievable. That's why I had to leave the room. You – *inaudible*.
- DB:** I think your solicitor may wish an adjournment to suggest to you that you moderate your behaviour.
- AM:** No. I don't want an adjournment.
- █:** I think she understands that. She apologises for her use of language.
- DB:** Well, on this occasion –
- C. **AM:** My apologies.
- DB:** On this occasion, I accept it but I hope there will be no repetition of –
- AM:** No, there won't.
- DB:** Nor of the wholly unfounded accusations of bias.
- AM:** It's my opinion, sir.
- D. **DB:** So, let me come to another matter, and this isn't in your statement, but I understand was raised with you at the 'Newsletter', and that relates to a financial irregularity involving Jamie Mackrell.
- AM:** With Jamie Mackrell?
- DB:** Yes. What do you know about that?
- AM:** All I – it's hearsay.
- DB:** You don't have personal knowledge of it.
- E. **AM:** No.
- DB:** OK. But I understand that you, being aware of that, albeit what you have been told, that you thought you might unwittingly have been – Mr McCrea may have attempted to have involved you in a similar –
- AM:** Yes.
- DB:** exercise.
- AM:** Yes.

- A. **DB:** And that was to do with £500, I think, was the sum involved. Is that right?  
**AM:** Yes.  
**DB:** Just tell me in your own words what that was about.  
**AM:** So in July time, Basil went on holiday to Portugal. I was being set up to be paid by People 1<sup>st</sup>. They were undergoing to get me onto the course as such. So he had went on holidays and spoke to me about getting paid. I had told him that I was struggling again for money and I needed to be paid as soon as possible. So, because he was going on holidays, he said that he was sending [REDACTED] to write cheques and send them to me on a weekly basis for each week that I worked. So at the end of the week, I would receive a cheque like that for £183.
- B. **DB:** OK.  
**AM:** And you can see that going into my bank there as well –  
**DB:** OK. That is helpful.  
**AM:** So I'm living with the assumption I get a cheque at the end of the week, that's the money that I've just worked for that week. That I just got paid for the week that I just worked. So that was fine. Later down the line, I received a payment from the Northern Ireland Assembly. There's a photocopy of the payslip.
- C. **DB:** Thank you.  
**AM:** For £1,223.55, and that came in on the 28 August. Now my natural pay should've been £782 roughly each month.  
**DB:** Yes.  
**AM:** But the Northern Ireland Assembly paid me £500 more.  
**DB:** Yes.
- D. **AM:** And that's where – then Basil was asking me to pay the money back to him - £500 – all back to him, and so I set up a standing order and paid it into that bank account that I'm pointing to there as well. And then I decided that I wasn't going to pay him any more money so I stopped it.  
**DB:** OK. And are you content that I –  
**AM:** Yes.  
**DB:** have these? Now I should say that you can rest assured that, in the event that I rely on any of this in my report, but I don't know yet whether it's going to be material, but if I do, or everything like account details and sort codes will be removed before I –
- E. [REDACTED]: *Inaudible.*  
**DB:** Well you already have but perhaps not hugely effectively.  
**AM:** No.  
**DB:** But it will be blanked out so as no one can conceivably see it.  
**AM:** I also paid £50 in cash to Suzanne Chalkley, which she gave to Basil, but I don't know where that went.

- A. DB: But this was, as I understand it, with the benefit of looking at some of the Assembly records, as I understand it, you started in Lisburn mid-month, the 17 July.
- AM: Yes.
- DB: And because of the way the –
- AM: No, I didn't go up to Lisburn till August.
- DB: Well I think you'll find that records show that you started on the 17 July.
- AM: Not in Lisburn, I didn't.
- DB: Well, perhaps the records are wrong.
- B. AM: Where are these records?
- DB: -
- Will they be discovered, too?
- AM: What are these records?
- DB: They are records from the Assembly.
- So let's just clarify: when did you start?
- C. AM: August.
- : And you are sure and you have a good recollection.
- AM: 100%
- : So the records must be incorrect.
- AM: The payments are going back to there, so he's paid me and now he's telling me that I need to – now, this is the second one I got – now he's telling me that I need to pay the £500 back, but yet the Assembly is saying I was paid from July time.
- D. DB: So you agreed with me at the very start of the interview when I was trying to clarify matters in my mind that you started paid work on the 17 July.
- : But not in Lisburn.
- DB: OK.
- AM: That's what you asked.
- E. DB: All right. All right. So the fact was you came on the payroll from the 17 July, and my understanding is that because of the way the payroll works, you didn't get paid at the end of July but rather, at the end of August, you got paid for July and August, and that's why you had £500 more.
- AM: OK.
- DB: Is that right?

- A. **AM:** I don't know. I don't know. This is the predicament. I don't know. I don't know if this is going back to the right place. I don't know if this is correct. I don't know whether he paid me the right money and I was trying to pay him back money that I didn't owe him or I was meant to pay the Northern Ireland Assembly the money and not Basil. I don't know. So I'm not commenting.

**DB:** Well, putting it shortly, you've told me, haven't you, that when you got your pay, your first pay from the Assembly, it was £500 more than you were expecting.

**AM:** No, I didn't see anything at the time, until the following month until I got the 700- odd pounds. Now you are missing the point here. I did not agree with Basil that I would have any sort of payment given to me early and I would pay him back at a later date. I did not once agree to this. I knew nothing of this. I was on jobseeker's allowance. Why the hell – sorry, I am allowed to say that?

- B. **■:** No.

**AM:** Sorry. Why would I agree to get myself into £500 of debt? No way. It is not – I would not have done that. My partner was working. I would happily live off his, which I was doing for a long time. I would not have taken £500 to pay it back. No. I'm sorry. I did not agree to that. This is what he does.

**DB:** You didn't return the cheques, so you did agree to it in the end.

**AM:** Because I thought – did you not listen to what I said? I worked a week and received a cheque at the end of the week, which I thought was my pay for that week, which was my money. The payments to be repaid back was not discussed with me.

- C. **DB:** Well, taking it to one stage further, what is this got – I mean, at the end of the day, you got £500 from Mr McCrea and you paid back £500 to Mr McCrea.

**AM:** No.

**DB:** Didn't you?

**AM:** No.

**DB:** How much did you pay back?

- D. **AM:** About 120 roughly.

**DB:** And what did you think when you'd been paid in full by the Assembly, you must've realised – I mean, where did you think the extra £500 came from when the Assembly paid you? What did you think that was for?

**AM:** I don't know.

**DB:** Well, most people, if they get £500 extra in their payslip –

- E. **AM:** Like I said, that payment was before my other payment came through so I didn't know it was out. If you look at it, you're sitting there with your hands on your lap, if you look at it, that payment was after. I had no idea that I was meant to be paid 700-odd pounds a month. As far as I was concerned, the month before, that was correct. The following month later, that, and then at that time. I had not agreed to pay back £500 so why should I? There's no contract signed. There's nothing. I'm not paying back money.

**DB:** So you thought it was just OK to keep the money.



- A** **AM:** Listen, I did not keep that money. I well-earned that money. I worked from February time until July time unpaid for about 60 hours a week, from 8 until maybe 3 o'clock in the morning, I worked. I earned that money. I did not just take it or not give it back.
- DB:** Very well. And what is, whatever happened with this £500, what's that got to do with the suggestion that Mr McCrea may have been trying to fiddle his expenses?
- AM:** I don't know. This is why I brought it to you because I don't know. All I know is I was given cheques, which I thought were for my work that I had done. I then got paid again by the Assembly, not thinking anything of it, then was hit with, "you owe me £500" and that's it. I don't know anything of this.
- B.** I don't know how things work or what account is being paid into or what account – do I need to pay it back to the Northern Ireland Assembly, do I pay it back to Basil directly, is it going into the right bank account? These are things that you need to investigate, not ask me. I don't know. I'm bringing this to your attention like you asked, so there you go, you can investigate it. I don't know whether it is correct or whether he is wrong.
- DB:** But, of course, you didn't actually bring this to me because it's not mentioned in your statement at all.
- AM:** Oh I don't know why it's not.
- DB:** Well that was going to be my next question. Why is it not?
- C.** **AM:** [REDACTED] done my statement. I don't know.
- [REDACTED]:** Well I think it would come under the title of what she believes were financial irregularity.
- DB:** Well that may be, but the rest of the statement is incredibly detailed, which is very helpful, and there's not even a mention of this.
- [REDACTED]:** Well you have documentary evidence and –
- DB:** But the question is why was it not mentioned in the statement. Do you have any explanation for that?
- [REDACTED]:** *Inaudible.*
- D.** **AM:** It was in my original statement, but once it was sent to my solicitors, it was edited. I didn't realise
- DB:** Well that must've been with your instructions.
- AM:** No. She was away on holiday. It wasn't [REDACTED] that done it.
- DB:** I can't believe that any solicitor would take something out of a client's statement without clearing it with the client.
- E.** **[REDACTED]:** In any event, I think that what we should now say is that it is now on the record and she wishes to introduce it in evidence as part of her original complaint.
- DB:** Well I have no difficulty with that, but my question is: why wasn't it mentioned earlier?
- [REDACTED]:** It is simply an oversight.
- AM:** Hold on, [REDACTED] How did you know about it then, to ask me?
- DB:** Because I have a number of sources of information.

A. AM: I didn't mention it to you the last time I was here, no?

DB: Now, are there any of the answers that you have given to me today that you wish, on reflection, to amend?

█: Do you want to add further information in relation to the Carecall matter? Can you recall that as yet? Or I suppose we could reserve the issue. We could bring that up at another date.

DB: By all means. You get another opportunity.

B. AM: No, no, no. I am 99.9% certain that I was told that the statements would all be sent to Basil for him to rebut them and that he would know, and that was it. Once the statements were sent to Basil, the whole process was shut down. They made out that, because I wasn't a paid employee at the time, that I wasn't allowed to be in it. There was minutes from the meeting and there's also a solicitor's letter that █ got that states that I shouldn't be allowed – involved – I shouldn't be allowed in the investigation.

█: May I just have a moment to consult with –

DB: Sure.

C. █: *There is the letter that – inaudible – do you want to introduce that in evidence?*

AM: Yes.

█: *That is the clerical investigation chronology of events.*

AM: Ah ha.

█: *And it refers there to the email received – inaudible – attachments, which confirms Basil received the report from Carecall on 3 June.*

D. AM: Yeah.

█: OK.

█: This is the only copy that I have of this. I can certainly forward it to you at a later date if that's –

DB: Yes.

█: You can introduce it in oral evidence there.

E. AM: This is a letter from Murphys Solicitors that was got on behalf, or by, █  
Sorry, you'll see it says:

*"It is in those circumstances that I would not recommend that this individual is offered the opportunity to avail of the services provided by Carecall. As I understand it, on the basis of my instructions, Carecall services are available to employees at the local Assembly. As this individual is no longer an employee of the Assembly, it would not be in the interests of the party to refer this person to Carecall for support or counselling at this stage. There is no doubt that employees in this jurisdiction enjoy a considerable number of rights due to the raft of –"*

AM: Am I meant to read that?

█: It doesn't matter. It's just the date of knowledge that we're talking about.

A. **AM:** On the 5 of May – sorry, on the 5 June, email received – this is a chronological event. Email received from Basil's legal advisers, attaching solicitor's letter, stating Basil had received a report from Carecall on the 3 of June. So he was aware of the allegations put to him. He knew all about them. So he's known from June what was going on. So there you go. There's a copy of the chronological order of events. I have another one. I'll send it to you again.

**DB:** Right, thank you for that.

**AM:** Would you like a copy of the minutes of the meeting as well? I can get you them, where they are all discussing about how to keep me out. They were taken by Annette Holden.

B. **DB:** Well, I can ask Annette for them because I still have to –

█ Can you recall the date of the meeting?

**AM:** It was the 14 of May.

**DB:** OK. I've still to speak with her so I can ask her for these.

█ *Inaudible.*

Can I just check that we are going to deal with the sexual impropriety at a later date?

C. **DB:** That all the – *Inaudible.* – the case is.

█ Then we can introduce that. We have other matters that we want to introduce, but we can certainly introduce them at that stage.

**DB:** Yes.

█ Thank you.

**DB:** Just I have some other people to see before I could appropriately interview your client on these matters.

D. Very well. Is there anything else that you wish to add?

█ *Inaudible.*

**AM:** Do you reckon that people – You probably won't even be aware about this, but from working in Basil's office, I've been receiving messages and emails from people looking payments from him that he didn't pay. There's emails from Malone Lodge Hotel from a woman called █ looking payment for the – *inaudible* – launch party. █ looking payment for a coach that he organised. I also had █ (?) on the phone to me up until at least January 2014 looking payment for the offices. Who else have I had in contact with me? Now, as far as I was aware from working in the office, he refused to pay MintManager for a website.

E. Once it was put into statements by Carecall, pfft, it disappeared on the expenses. VSL was mentioned in my statement that he didn't pay – it was only £30, but he still didn't pay it. He didn't pay it and then, pfft, it was on the expenses.

**DB:** Now these are of interest, but they are only of interest in my jurisdiction of they are in some way connected with a breach of the code of conduct. Now if you're saying that there was a breach of the code of conduct –

**AM:** I don't need a code of conduct. I don't know. That's up to other people to decide. I haven't a clue.

A. DB: Yeah, but I can only deal with conduct that's a breach of the code, and simply not paying your creditors –

█: Well is that not, if someone who is in public office is not paying their bills, is that not something that a member of parliament should be responsible for? Does that not bring the Assembly into disrepute?

DB: Well, as you know, there may be all sorts of reasons for not paying bills. You may dispute that the service was delivered to the required standard, and unless there was something much more material than that to substantiate it, I have to be satisfied that it is a prima facie case, and just the fact that a bill hasn't been paid doesn't get to the threshold.

B. But if you have information or anything more when you go home and you reflect on this, if there is anything else to indicate that there was anything improper in that he was claiming for these through expenses, for example, and not paying the bills or anything like that, then I would be very interested to hear from you on that.

█: OK.

DB: And meantime, it's probably best if you keep these so as you have them to refer to.

Is that everything from today? As I say, there will be other opportunities –

C. AM: What about –

█: Well I think in relation to those matters that we wanted to deal specifically today that we have addressed those issues with the committee now.

DB: OK.

AM: I shouldn't introduce the messages put on Twitter about the investigation that he is contacting people?

█: Well you did give evidence in relation to, just in relation to the contact to the 'Daily Mail' –

D. AM: No, I mean the girl that's mentioned in my statement that he is now contacting on Twitter to have private conversations with. I want to introduce it now.

█: OK.

AM: Just so – he could still be doing it.

█: If you just outline to the –

E. AM: So I was on Twitter. There is a young girl mentioned in my statement that, obviously, Basil would want to have, and she sent it to him, saying I'd mentioned her. █ she's called. Originally █. But there's a message on Twitter that he put out publicly telling her that she needs to follow him so that they can privately message each other. So I don't know whether you also think that there's anything wrong with that, but I personally don't think he should be contacting people who's involved in an investigation and privately talking to them and asking people for statements.

DB: I'm sorry. Who is this person?

- A. **AM:** She's called [REDACTED] Originally called [REDACTED] There. So that's Basil contacting [REDACTED], who's mentioned in my statement, telling her to follow him so that they can PM, which is direct messaging, which is private messaging on Twitter. So, and I'd like you to bear in mind as well that this girl phoned me on the day that the BBC thing went out and was on the phone, crying down the phone to me, telling me how she should have said something, that she knew what was going on, that she seen how he was treating people and how he was treating me, and I have a witness to this conversation, and now there they are on Twitter.
- DB:** I mean I have seen the name before, but I just don't remember where it is in your statement.
- B. **AM:** It should be in my statement.
- [REDACTED]: She wasn't [REDACTED] What was she then?
- AM:** [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]: Was she then - What was her name? Oh she is now something else.
- AM:** She is mentioned in it. Why is she not? She was.
- Is that another oversight? Never worry.
- C. **DB:** I have to – *inaudible* – but if it wasn't mentioned in your statement, I'm not clear how Mr McCrea would know she was involved.
- AM:** Yeah, I know. It's fine.
- [REDACTED]: Well, it will become clear from your report, I presume, because you will bring the report to him, and if we have given additional evidence about that, it will be brought to his attention, won't it?
- DB:** Well my report will only – I should just explain so that we are clear on this. In due course, I will finish this report. Now the timescale for this at the moment is far from clear because you appreciate I am going to have to see you again and there are a huge number of other witnesses to see.
- D. It'll certainly not be before Christmas when it's published. Once I complete it, I submit to the committee, and they will consider it and, in due course, publish their report, which will have my report attached to it, and the statements of the witnesses will be attached to that, and the first Mr McCrea will get to know of what's in the report is when a draft gets sent to him to check. So, I mean, that's likely to be some considerable time.
- AM:** So have you sent any – you've sent correspondence to Basil and he knows what the allegations are.
- E. **DB:** He gets a copy of your complaint when it's made, as soon as I – *inaudible* – it's inadmissible, which I have done –
- AM:** And is there any way that you can go back –
- [REDACTED]: No but in your – just so I'm clear – in your report of this meeting, of this evidence, it will contain a true record of –
- DB:** Oh yes.
- [REDACTED]: So, and therefore, it will be contained in that report, and that report will go to Mr McCrea. Is that correct?

A. DB: Only when the committee publishes –

█: After the committee have approved it.

DB: Only then.

█: So it will be contained in that.

DB: But I mean, I think the suggestion was, and I mean I quite understand why you're making it, would I be drawing this to the attention of Mr McCrea now to say, "look, you shouldn't be speaking to this person cos they're involved in the investigation".

AM: Yeah.

B. DB: I mean that's something I will consider.

AM: There. That's just your proof – denies it.

DB: Just to help me, you don't happen to know the dates of that –

AM: That was the other day. That was –

█: Is there a date? Did you put anything on the back of that?

AM: No. What day is it? It's Thursday today.

█: This is the thirteenth.

AM: That was roughly Sunday or Monday, it was.

C. DB: OK. That's - Do you want a copy of this?

█: Do you have copies of that, Ashleigh, or do you want me to keep? Yeah, you could get me copies.

AM: I'll get you copies.

█: That would be great.

DB: Right, can we then just terminate the interview at 3.32.





COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX



Holmes and Moffitt  
Solicitors  
218 Knock Road  
Castlereagh  
BELFAST  
BT5 6QD

Your Ref: SL/JT

15 January 2015

Dear Sirs

**YOUR CLIENT – ASHLEIGH MURRAY, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]**  
**COMPLAINT AGAINST BASIL MCCREA MLA**

I have now reached a stage of my investigation when it would be appropriate to meet again with your client.

The particular matters on which I wish to take her evidence are as follows –

1. her allegation of improper use of OCE by Mr McCrea as described in her statement in support of her complaint;
2. her allegations of sexually inappropriate behavior by Mr McCrea as described in that statement;
3. her allegations of bullying, harassment and irrational behavior by Mr McCrea towards her and others working for him as described in that statement; and
4. her employment history prior to starting work as a volunteer for Mr McCrea including her reasons for leaving any employment and any complaints made by or against her.

Plainly the length of this next interview will depend very largely on how much your client has to say but my best estimate is that it should last around 90 minutes.



I would be grateful if you would contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] to  
arrange a mutually convenient date for the meeting.

Yours faithfully

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DB 16  
**HOLMES  
MOFFITT**

Mr Douglas Bain CBE TD  
Northern Ireland Assembly  
Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

SL/LC

Our Ref

Your Ref

2 March 2015

Dear Sir

Re: Our Client: Ashleigh Murray of [REDACTED]

We refer to the above matter and to your letter of 15 January 2015.

We now enclose medical report from our client's GP Dr [REDACTED] in relation to her ongoing medical condition.

As you can see therefrom, due to the stress of the current proceedings, our client will be unable to attend for a further interview.

We trust you will note the position accordingly.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]  
for Holmes & Moffitt, Solicitors  
[REDACTED]

Enc

218 Knock Road, Castlereagh,  
Belfast BT5 6QD  
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

DB17

29 January 2015

Re: Miss Ashleigh Murray

Dear Sir/Madam,

Miss Murray [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. She has been called for a hearing of the Standard's and Privileges Committee. She has found the process very traumatic and does not feel fit to attend. Given how this process has affected her perhaps she could be excluded from giving further evidence.

Yours faithfully

Dr [REDACTED]

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DB 18

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
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BT4 3XX

[REDACTED]

Holmes and Moffitt  
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218 Knock Road  
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Your Ref: SL/LC

5 March 2015

Dear Sirs

**YOUR CLIENT – ASHLEIGH MURRAY,** [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 2 March 2015 enclosing a medical certificate dated 29 January 2015. Although that certificate does not state that attendance would have a significant adverse impact on your client's health I am prepared, meantime, not to require her attendance.

However, as you will appreciate, it will not be possible for me to comply with my statutory duty to undertake a full and thorough investigation of your client's complaint without speaking with her on at least one further occasion. Accordingly, I would be grateful for an indication from you of when she is likely to be fit enough to attend. If that is not within a reasonable time I will have to consider whether or not her complaint can remain under investigation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

[REDACTED]

Holmes Moffitt  
Solicitors  
218 Knock Road  
Castlereagh  
BELFAST  
BT5 6QD

Your Ref: SL/LC

2 April 2015

Dear Sirs

**YOUR CLIENT – ASHLEIGH MURRAY,** [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 25 March 2015.

I note that you say that you will contact me when you are satisfied that your client is in a fit state to give further evidence. That is not acceptable.

If I serve a Notice on your client under sections 28 and 29 of the 2011 Act requiring her attendance to give evidence she will be liable to prosecution under section 31(1) if she fails, without reasonable excuse, to attend. I accept that ill health could be such an excuse. However, your unqualified opinion on your client's health and fitness to attend carries no weight.

I note that Dr [REDACTED] letter is dated 29 January 2015 and would be grateful for an explanation of why it took until 2 March 2015 for you to furnish it to me. I note also that his letter appears to have proceeded on the false premise, presumably based on information given by your client, that she had appeared and was again to appear before a Committee. As you know that is incorrect. I am concerned that the false information may have influenced Dr [REDACTED] opinion as to her fitness to attend.

I am anxious to complete my investigation of your client's complaint as expeditiously as possible. I would much prefer to have the benefit of your client's evidence in undertaking that task, but simply postponing my work indefinitely is not an attractive option. That is why I require a medical certificate giving an indication of when your client is likely to be able to attend for interview.

In addition to giving that information the certificate should also state –



1. the date of the examination;
2. the exact nature of your client's ailment; and
3. why that ailment prevents her from attending for interview.

I enclose a note prepared by the CPS on the issuing of medical certificates which you may wish to provide to Dr [REDACTED] or whoever else is to undertake the examination of your client. You will doubtless also wish to ensure that the practitioner understands that your client will be interviewed by one person and that she may be accompanied throughout by a person of her choice. Perhaps the closest parallel is whether she would be fit for police interview.

I appreciate that it may take a little time for you to arrange the provision of a medical certificate and, accordingly, I am prepared to postpone my decision on how best to proceed with my investigation **until 14 May 2015**. As you will appreciate that date will be six months from the date of your client's first interview.

In your letter you ask why I had been in touch with [REDACTED] and their solicitors. I contacted the company to obtain records which I believed, on the basis of credible information I had received, were likely to contain information relating to my investigation. I did not contact you or your client because the records sought were those of [REDACTED]

Please [REDACTED] that if by [REDACTED] May 2015 [REDACTED] we not received from you an acceptable medical certificate it is likely that I will proceed with my investigation without further correspondence.

Yours faithfully

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

Enc



# Issuing of Medical Certificates

Doctors will be aware that medical notes are normally submitted by defendants in criminal proceedings as justification for not answering bail. Medical notes may also be submitted by witnesses who are due to give evidence and jurors.

If a medical certificate is accepted by the court, this will result in cases (including contested hearings and trials) being adjourned rather than the court issuing a warrant for the defendants arrest without bail. Medical certificates will also provide the defendant with sufficient evidence to defend a charge of failure to surrender to bail.

However, a court is not absolutely bound by a medical certificate. The medical practitioner providing the certificate may be required by the court to give evidence. Alternatively the court may exercise its discretion to disregard a certificate, which it finds unsatisfactory: *R. v Ealing Magistrates Court Ex p. Burgess* (2001) 165 J.P. 82.

Circumstances where a court may find a medical certificate to be unsatisfactory include:

1. Where the certificate indicates that the defendant is unfit to work (rather than to attend court);
2. Where the nature of the defendant's ailment (e.g. a broken arm) does not appear to be capable of preventing his attendance at court;
3. Where the defendant is certified as suffering from stress/anxiety/depression and there is no indication of the defendant recovering within a realistic timescale.

It therefore follows that as a minimum standard a medical certificate should set out:

1. The date on which the medical practitioner examined the defendant;
2. The exact nature of the defendant's ailment;
3. If it is not self-evident, why the ailment prevents the defendant from attending court;
4. An indication as to when the defendant is likely to be able to attend court, or a date when the current certificate expires.

Medical practitioners should be aware that when issuing a certificate to a defendant in criminal proceedings they make themselves liable to being summonsed to court to give evidence about the content of the certificate, and may be asked to justify their statements.

## How to use this Legal Guidance

### CPS Public Consultations

We want to hear your views about our prosecution policy and so we conduct consultations to help inform our policy making.

Visit the [consultations page to view the current and previous consultations](#)







**KING & GOWDY**

(Incorporating S. & R. CRYMBLE)  
SOLICITORS

298, UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD  
BELFAST BT4 3EJ

DB 21

[REDACTED]

Our ref: AAK/TJ/SPA0030002

[REDACTED]

Wednesday, 22 July 2015

**FIRST CLASS POST**

FAO: The Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283, Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX

Dear Sirs

Re. Ashleigh Murray

Our Client: [REDACTED]

We refer to your letter dated 20 July 2015.

Our client has instructed us to reply as follows:-

[REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

---

King & Gowdy



**KING & GOWDY**  
(incorporating S. & R. CRYMBLE)  
SOLICITORS

298, UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD  
BELFAST BT4 3EJ

[REDACTED]

Our ref: AAK/TJ/SPA0030002

[REDACTED]

Tuesday, 9 June 2015

**BY FIRST CLASS POST**

FAO: The Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283, Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX

Dear Sirs

**Re: Ashleigh Murray**

**Our Client:** [REDACTED]

We refer to our letter dated 4 June 2015.

We enclose herewith:-

- 1) Letter from Ashleigh Murray to her employer dated 4 June 2012
- 2) Letter from Ashleigh Murray to her employer dated 31 May 2012
- 3) Letter from Employer to Ashleigh Murray dated 14 June 2012

Ms Murray was employed as a Care Assistant by [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] from [REDACTED]

We trust this address is your requests for information.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

King & Gowdy  
Enc.





Letter Chambers/Murray 14 June 2012

This document was redacted by the Committee.

Letter Murray/[REDACTED] 31 May 2012

This document was redacted by the Committee.

Letter Murray/[REDACTED] 4 June 2012

This document was redacted by the Committee.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Karen Tabahe

**Date:** 27 January 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Karen Tabahe

**Time Started:** 15.00 pm

**Time Ended:** 15.43 pm

**A. DB:** OK. Thank you for coming. As you see, we're recording this interview.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** And the time is now 3 pm on 27 January 2015. Present are Douglas Bain; [REDACTED], as note-taker; and you are?

**KT:** Karen Tabahe — T-A-B-A-H-E.

**DB:** That's very helpful. Now I think that I explained in the note I sent you that, in this particular investigation, I'm taking evidence on oath. So are you content to make an oath on the Bible or do you prefer to make an affirmation?

**KT:** I am indeed; on the Bible, I am indeed.

**B. DB:** Could you take the book in your right hand please then and read the words of the oath?

**KT:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**DB:** Thank you very much. Now there are a couple of other formalities I have to deal with to keep everything right.

**KT:** No problem.

**DB:** Can you confirm that you've received from me a note setting out the purpose of this interview?

**KT:** I have indeed.

**DB:** And along with that there was a note outlining the procedure for the investigation and for the interview.

**C. KT:** Yes.

**DB:** And that note, I think, drew attention to a number of criminal offences.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** And do you have any questions on any of that?

**KT:** No.

**DB:** OK. That's — are you content that I call you Karen?

**KT:** Of course. That's not a problem.

**DB:** OK. Thank you very much. Can I just try and make sure I've understood the sort of history around this? Am I right that you started working for Mr McCrea when he was a UUP MLA in November 2009?

**KT:** Yes; in paid employment. Prior to that, I was a volunteer with him from 2008.

**A. DB:** And when you started in paid employment in November 2009, was that full time or part time?

**KT:** Part-time hours.

**DB:** Roughly how many hours? Do you remember?

**KT:** 16 hours.

**DB:** 16 hours. And you're still working for Mr McCrea now.

**KT:** Yes, I am indeed.

**DB:** And what are your hours now?

**KT:** 18 hours — I'm part time again.

**DB:** OK. And was there a period when you were working full time?

**B. KT:** I have never worked full time, but the most hours that I worked for Mr McCrea would've been 26 hours, Monday to Thursday.

**DB:** Right. OK. And so that means that you were working with Mr McCrea throughout the time that he was in the UUP —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — and then it was the leadership bid and he resigned and then NI21 was formed.

**KT:** Worked closely with him in the UUP but not as closely — I actually wasn't really involved in a lot of the NI21, the new party and the forming of that, in the sense, if I can explain it, I would've been his PA during the time of the UUP. In NI21, things changed a lot, so he had a lot more sort of people doing different things.

**DB:** OK. We'll come to that.

**C. KT:** OK.

**DB:** And would I be right in thinking that, I mean the life of an MLA is always busy, I'm sure, but was it particularly busy around the time of the leadership bid?

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** The resignation and then the forming of NI21?

**KT:** Yes. It was extremely busy, and I would've known that Mr McCrea — I know from working in this building, doing a prior job, that himself and another Member would be classed as the two busiest MLAs because of the hours that they would've put in in this building.

**DB:** OK. And can we look at your employment for Mr McCrea in a number of time periods?

**A. KT:** Yes.

**DB:** In the period from November 2009 up until just before his leadership bid, how would you describe his conduct towards you during that period?

**KT:** His conduct towards me from 2009 until 2013; yes, his conduct would've been what I would've expected from a politician. Things got quite difficult for me from February 2013 for a period of April 2013. April was quite difficult for me. The office environment was not nice.

**DB:** Yes. I appreciate this is difficult for you.

**KT:** Yes. I'm not sure when I might need to stop.

**DB:** No. No. It's all right. And was that due to, amongst other things, a change in Mr McCrea's behaviour?

**KT:** Yes. I would've seen a change in Mr McCrea's behaviour, but I hope you'll give me an opportunity to explain what happened between him and I at a later date, OK?

**B. DB:** Indeed I will.

**KT:** OK. So in the August 2013<sup>1</sup>, it was quite a difficult period for me, and I suppose the nature of person that I am as well, I always like to think that, you know, I'm conscientious and I'm maybe from the old school where you just get on with your job etc. Basil might've shouted an odd time but he came in and would've sort of said — you know, he would've apologised, and there was no real harm taken. And, to be honest with you, Mr Bain, I wouldn't have lasted with Mr McCrea for the length of time that I have if he hadn't of been a nice person, to be honest.

In August 2013<sup>2</sup>, I found it very upsetting, and he was trying to form a new party. He had lost the whip. He got disciplined, which, I suppose, I — when you're going through stuff, you tend to look at what's going on in your life and you forget that the other person is also having to deal with difficult things. But he had shouted at me in a room where there were other people present, and that's what did for me.

**C. That really made me feel quite not valued as a person, and John McCallister was in the room, as were Fiona McAteer and other people's names who haven't been mentioned, so I'm not sure if you want me to. But I found that very difficult and, as a result, I left work the next day.**

**DB:** I think, just to be clear, if I can be clear about the timing of this; I've been able to obtain from the Assembly copies of your sick lines.

**KT:** Yes. Oh I know the dates. I was the —

**DB:** I think you went off on 17 April and you were off until 7 May.

**KT:** Of May; that's right. That's correct.

**DB:** So this meeting that you've told me about was just before 17 April.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see email at page 17 where date corrected to February 2013

<sup>2</sup> Please see email at page 17 where date corrected to April 2013



**KT:** No, I went, sorry, I went — I would've walked out of work on 16 April.

**DB:** All right.

- A. KT:** And that's the date that John McCallister was in the room, and Basil also came in, and Basil had really shouted at me there about — it was about organising the NI21. They were having like a pre-launch, and they needed, you know, they were pressure, and there was a lot of misunderstanding, to be honest, and he was probably under pressure, but I didn't like what he did on that particular day. It was like the final straw for me on 16 April.

**DB:** OK.

**KT:** So I left work and then went to see my doctor, and my doctor put on sick with stress.

**DB:** OK. And just to be clear, was that the pre-launch event at La Mon?

**KT:** No. That hadn't even started yet. This was only April 2013. This —

- B. DB:** This was some other —

**KT:** Yes. This was, sorry, this was just the organisation. We were just organising the different things. The launch —

**DB:** You see, I understood that the launch was in the Europa, wasn't it?

**KT:** That was 6 June, the launch. We had a pre-launch.

**DB:** Wasn't there a pre-launch event at La Mon?

**KT:** I was never at that, you see.

**DB:** No, but wasn't that what this —

**KT:** That's the one. Yes, that's what that was about. Sorry, Douglas, sorry. Yes, sorry. They were trying to organise that, and Basil wanted me to get an event and time restraints were on. Apologies; cos we had that many different things.

- C. DB:** And I think you've said that one of the changes that took place about that time — there were a lot more people involved —

**KT:** Very much so.

**DB:** — because of working towards the new party.

**KT:** Very much so.

**DB:** And was there an element of confusion about who was supposed to do what?

**KT:** Yes there would have been, to be honest, and maybe lack of communications between people. Where before, it was just myself and Basil, I wasn't used with having a lot more people about.

**DB:** And was one of the people that was around at that time Annette Holden?

**KT:** Yes. Yes.

**A. DB:** And she was a long-term employee of John McCallister.

**KT:** That's right. That's right.

**DB:** And did she get involved in working towards this pre-launch event?

**KT:** Yeah. There was a real misunderstanding. Annette would be very professional and worked for John much longer than me and have a political maybe background, where I don't. And she was the one that was meant to be organising it all, and then, of course, Mr McCrea had asked me to organise the event, but I think perhaps there was a bit of misunderstanding. I wouldn't have had the ability to organise all the other things but I did the event.

**DB:** OK. And I mean I don't want to delve into your personal life —

**KT:** No. Yes. Yes.

**B. DB:** But were you under other pressures outside work at that time?

**KT:** Yes. I would've been — now I saw in the notes, I think, in 2009 from a Carecall. It wasn't that I was [REDACTED] I think because I mentioned that date. But there was different things within my own family life, which maybe — can I keep them personal?

**DB:** Yes.

**KT:** They were quite difficult cos [REDACTED] and, in actual fact, Mr McCrea came along with me and really supported me through that whole set of circumstances, which were very difficult for me.

**DB:** Now I think, when you returned to work —

**KT:** On 7 May '13.

**C. DB:** There were a number of other new faces.

**KT:** Oh boys a dear, there was.

**DB:** And was one of these Alan Patterson?

**KT:** I didn't meet Alan Patterson until — my dates mightn't be too sure — I don't think it was — it might've been just casually — but I maybe only met him two times. He was the party secretary, I believe, and he would've been involved in the executive meetings, and I was never involved very much with NI21, believe it or believe it not, and I'll explain that to you.

**DB:** You see, I've been told —

**KT:** Yes.

**A. DB:** I don't know whether it's correct or not —

**KT:** Right.

**DB:** That one of Mr Patterson's roles was to try and sort out roles within the party and who did what.

**KT:** Yes. That's correct. That's where I would've met him. I think July he met up with me and we discussed — I think it was the middle of July because it would've been after the launch of the party. I think I might've met Alan — I met loads of people in the launch of the party. My role in the launch of the party on 6 June was just a minor role. I was just ticking people off as they came in. Alan came and spoke to me, because Mr McCrea had asked him to do it, about the roles, about our roles, and that was in July.

**B. DB:** Was that in part because Ashleigh Murray had come on the scene while you were off?

**KT:** Yes. Ashleigh came actually the time — I think she was there just before I went off on the sick, and I think it was just because, to be honest, Mr Bain, they were starting a new party, and there was loads of people coming on board and they all wanted to play their part. So I had met Ashleigh just before I had gone off on the sick, and then she had been going out to some appointments with Basil, where I was sort of staying up here in Stormont.

**DB:** Right. OK.

**KT:** And I met Alan — hold on, I met him again in August at another team meeting, but I didn't, you know, he wasn't, cos it was over the summertime and it was recess, I don't, I don't remember meeting him again.

**C. DB:** OK. And after you came back from your period of sick leave, did you have a conversation with Ashleigh about her background?

**KT:** Yes. Now that came about — it was a Friday, because I didn't work on a Friday, and Mr McCrea contacted me on my mobile phone and told me that Ashleigh was in the car and that he would like to arrange for her to come up and speak to me about a confidential matter that had happened to her in her childhood.

**DB:** OK.

**KT:** And we — I said, "No problem", and we arranged that.

**DB:** And I think as a result of that was it your understanding that she went to see the police?

**KT:** Yes, and nobody in the office knew. I would be quite confidential like that, Mr Bain.

**DB:** Then in August of that year, I think you were on holiday.

**A.** **KT:** That's right. And we had a team meeting — I think 27 August. We had another team meeting with the new party secretary, [REDACTED]

**DB:** OK. And, by that stage, had Kirsty McClay arrived on the scene?

**KT:** Kirsty, I think, came about June-time, and then, in August, at the team meeting, it was getting quite confusing for me because we were all asked to describe our roles, and she obviously described the role that I was doing, so this was another person, if you understood, and I did feel, you know, because what had happened to me and then, it did, I felt quite upset about it.

**DB:** And so that I am clear, by this stage, had Ashleigh moved to working at Lisburn?

**KT:** I think Ashleigh went about September-time. About September-time in Daltons in Lisburn.

**B.** **DB:** So, potentially, there were —

**KT:** Oh no, she was there. You're right. She was there. No, she was there maybe about — Cos I was off on holidays in August. So, yes, she probably started in — I'm not sure because it was Fiona dealt with her contract. I think she did like a Steps Back to Work programme, and Fiona and, I think, [REDACTED] sorted all that out.

**DB:** But, in any event, at this meeting you had, you thought you were Basil's PA —

**KT:** Exactly.

**DB:** And Kirsty thought she was —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** And Ashleigh had previously thought she was.

**KT:** Yes. So it was all confusing and upsetting for those who felt upset.

**C.** **DB:** Yes. And then was it at that meeting that — what action was taken as a result of that?

**KT:** Nothing. I ended up — Basil then spoke to me in [REDACTED]'s office — I think it was the beginning of September — and he said that Kirsty and I now were both his Pas, and I was to stay here and Kirsty would probably be going out, you know, cos he needed someone to go out with him to different things as well. I would've gone to things with him at night. Just for the record, I would've accompanied Mr McCrea, so it wasn't like a new thing. It was something that was done.

Now, when he did speak to me about that, he did raise with me that, at times, he just wanted to bring to my attention that I had made mistakes in the calendar and he said, "Look it's really important that my diary is right", and we talked about that, and I said, "Right, I'll do my best to make sure that it is right". Cos he was a very busy politician.

**DB:** And, I mean, was that right that, from time to time, there had been minor errors?

- A. **KT:** Oh yes, I did. Oh yes, I did. Oh yes, I did indeed. And I hated myself so I did for doing it cos I didn't like to make mistakes.

**DB:** And then did there come a time when you moved to work for part of the time in Lisburn?

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** How did that come about?

**KT:** Basil spoke to me about the third week of September and asked me to go out to Daltons and work alongside Ashleigh and, I suppose, manage her. And, you know, the two of us, when I did go out, we developed a good working relationship. I was only there for about two weeks. Ashleigh knew I wasn't happy at Mr McCrea sending me out there because the office — it wasn't a suitable office. It was quite a cold building etc, and I had no issue being out in Lisburn if the office had've been better but it just wasn't suitable.

- B. **DB:** And during the time, these two weeks, did you form any view as to Ashleigh's competence to do the work she was doing?

**KT:** There's not many people I don't like, Mr Bain. I always try to get on with most people. I'm a rare person in this world. I suppose because I had dealt with quite personal stuff that Ashleigh had been involved in, I was aware, sadly, of her background. I felt she had the ability to do the work that Mr McCrea wanted her to do, but she would've made excuses: she couldn't come out. It was unbelievable. I even tried to give her a lift because I lived nearby, within travelling distance to her home, and she just wanted to get the bus in. She didn't come in. She worked different hours and things. I don't think she was all together dependable, but I felt she wanted to be dependable.

**DB:** So would it be fair to describe it as —

**KT:** A bit erratic.

**DB:** A bit erratic. Trying hard —

- C. **KT:** Exactly.

**DB:** — but a bit erratic.

**KT:** Exactly. And I mean I knew Mr McCrea. I knew he wanted to give her a chance. Cos it wasn't the first young person that he'd given opportunities to.

**DB:** Tell me, prior to you going out to Lisburn, had you had a phone call to Ashleigh about her clocking in in the morning?

**KT:** Pardon.

**DB:** About her clocking in by phoning you.

**KT:** Yes. Oh yes. There was that. That kind of was done with myself, yes, just to let me know that she was there.

- A.** But it was also, I rang her when I was in the Stormont office myself because I just wanted to make sure she was OK cos she was in an office on a third floor by herself. And I got the name as Mother Hen in the office, so that was me just going the extra mile to make sure she was OK.

**DB:** And was it Mr McCrea's suggestion that you asked her to phone you on the landline?

**KT:** He did ask me whenever I went out, but, before that, I took that on my own initiative when she first went out.

**DB:** OK.

**KT:** So it was a bit of both to be honest.

**DB:** OK. Was her timekeeping reliable?

- B.** **KT:** It wasn't good.

**DB:** OK. So it wasn't unreasonable to seek confirmation that she was actually at work on time?

**KT:** No. In fairness, she did go out to things at night, you know, and if she was doing that, I believe Suzanne Chalkley was someone who was really keeping an eye then on what she was doing. She was a party member.

**DB:** And for the two weeks that you were working at Lisburn and Ashleigh was there, did you come to know her better?

**KT:** In a working capacity. I mean, I felt for her because I knew she had a tough life, and I said, "Look, let's try and we'll make this work together and, you know, we'll just get on with what we're trying to do".

- C.** **DB:** And did she say anything to you at that time about Mr McCrea's conduct towards her?

**KT:** Yes. She did. Because she knew — she saw a side to me — she thought I was soft — but she saw a side to me that she realised that I wasn't soft, and it was, you know, I told her that I wasn't happy with what Mr McCrea had done and the way he had done that. She then shared with me that I want to show you something and logged into Mr McCrea's Facebook account, where we all would've had the passwords as staff. I mean, it was all done very confidential. You didn't give the passwords out, but we all would've had the passwords. I don't do — I'm not great at social media so it was like blank. She got — she seemed really annoyed about this, and I said, "What's wrong", and she said, "Oh don't worry, I took a screenshot of this", and she showed me — it appeared to be a conversation between both of them. I really can't remember what it was about. Maybe when you're talking to me about the Carecall, I'll explain something about that message maybe.

**DB:** OK.



**A.** **KT:** So, what happened was, you know, she did seem, you know, annoyed, and maybe she felt that he wasn't treating her right because she maybe liked being up at Stormont. She certainly never said that to me, but because she was travelling with him and getting to meet people. But, at no time, Ashleigh never brought anything to my attention of any nature or said that Mr McCrea hadn't treated her properly. She never said anything like that.

**DB:** Did she, eh, say anything to you about an incident said to have taken place at La Mon?

**KT:** Yes. Yes. She did.

**DB:** Do you recall what she said to you about that?

**KT:** She said that, at the La Mon — I don't think it was that, it might have been during that period of time; I'm not 100% sure — she said that, when they were at La Mon, that Mr McCrea had asked her to go out to get something from his car and bring it up into the room.

**B.** **DB:** Yes.

**KT:** And then, whenever she came into the room — I don't remember her telling me anything. Oh no, sorry: he asked her to massage his shoulders. That's what it was.

**DB:** Did she ever say to you that, at that particular incident, Mr McCrea had come into the room with his trousers down?

**KT:** No. No. Definitely not.

**DB:** And pulled down her pants and lifted her skirt.

**KT:** No. Definitely not. Definitely not. And, in relation to that, Mr Bain, because my background is I'm an [REDACTED] if she had of said that to me, I would have taken that very, very seriously, that allegation and would have even gone to the police with her.

**C.** **DB:** It's not something you could've forgotten.

**KT:** Oh, definitely not. No that definitely was not raised with me.

**DB:** And then, other than this request to massage his shoulders —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — did Ashleigh ever say anything about Mr McCrea's conduct that could be construed as having any sort of sexual content?

**KT:** She, she, I think she said to me once about grooming. You know, that she felt maybe that it was a type of grooming, but I think that came out maybe afterwards. Because I, I hadn't been around, which I'll explain, because then the two weeks out in Lisburn, I then was working from home, so I never saw anybody.

**DB:** Right. Well I was going to ask you about that.

**KT:** Yes.

**A. DB:** You worked at home —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — for a time, until, I think, just before Christmas 2013, [REDACTED]

**KT:** That's right. That's right.

**DB:** And what work were you doing from home?

**KT:** Oh, I was doing membership, and I was at home simply because the office was so cold that we were working in, and the office up at Stormont was, it was too busy. So the nature of that work that I was doing, I could do at home, and Mr McCrea knew that I would do the hours, you know; that I would work conscientiously, you know, which I've always done for all my employers.

**DB:** And I think — I don't want to know your address — but —

**B. KT:** No.

**DB:** — you live quite close to Stormont.

**KT:** I do, and that's why —

**DB:** So it was convenient enough.

**KT:** It was very convenient. It was very — and, you know, I sent emails. People knew I was working because I was kept online.

**DB:** [REDACTED]

**KT:** [REDACTED]

**DB:** — you were off work until mid-February.

**KT:** Yes.

**C. DB:** 17 February.

**KT:** That's right. I came back on 17 February.

**DB:** And, on your return to work, did you have a conversation with Mr McCrea?

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** Tell me about that.

**KT:** OK. Well, my period, during the period that I was off, I had different people contacted me, and I've kept that confidential cos it's the person that I am, and because a lot of people know the sort of person or the character that I have — I'm not perfect, Mr Bain — they just felt, they were kinda sad and felt that — they felt that Mr McCrea hadn't treated me properly etc, and I just felt, because I was off during that time, and because of the new party — I hadn't really been involved in it — I felt maybe it's time for me to move on and do new stuff.



- A.** And, during that time, my husband had had an opportunity to go to Australia, so I felt, when I was going back to work, I was handing in my notice, but I wanted to speak to Mr McCrea to let him know how I was feeling and to do it the proper way, because I've had friends before that have had issues and, sometimes, it gets a bit complicated. I felt it was better for me, cos I knew him well enough, to actually tell him what that period was like for me.

So I came back on 17 February, and Mr McCrea asked to speak to me. We went down to John McCallister's office and we chatted, and I raised, you know, how I felt during that period of time. I said, "Look, if you let me talk to you and then you can speak to me". And I said, "I felt really humiliated, I think, cos you did it in front of others. If it hadn't of been in front of others, I would've been fine".

**DB:** And that is referring back to the —

**KT:** That's that incident in April where it was very difficult for me. And also, you know, I shared all that with him, and, you know, I said, "I've always been loyal to you" — but I'm always loyal to anybody I work for.

- B.** It's not just because of who he is. And then he really opened up and shared a lot of personal stuff me, which I don't want, cos I did it in confidentiality. And, to be honest, Mr Bain, it was a really lovely experience for both of us because we gave each other a hug, and, you know, I apologised for the mistakes that I had made, and he apologised, but it was done in a really nice way, and he said, "Look, I really want you to think about it. If you want to go, go, but would you maybe think about staying for a month?" Which I did, and I actually had no problem with him, you know, we got on really well, so I stayed.

**DB:** And have you had any problems since then?

**KT:** No. No. No.

**DB:** And you mentioned that, while you were off, you had various people —

**KT:** Yes. Yes.

- C.** **DB:** — concerned about Mr McCrea's conduct.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** Did you take legal advice at that time?

**KT:** No. No. Mr Bain, it's not my way to go, you know, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
KT: [REDACTED] I always like to talk to people first, and, actually, if there's problems in work, I've always taught to go and talk to the person or whoever's, you know, the person there that you're meant to go and talk to. So, no, I wouldn't have gone a legal route. That wouldn't have been the way I would've dealt with this.

DB: Now, we come to the Carecall investigation —

KT: Yes.

B. DB: — and I think you agreed to meet with Carecall as part of that investigation.

KT: I did indeed.

DB: And who was it asked you to become involved in that?

KT: If I can explain, it was Fiona McAteer. Fiona and I had a pretty good relationship. As I explained, because I was off again on leave in the April, I came back on 7 May 2014, which was exactly a year later when I came back off the sick. And I always touched base with staff members to see how people were doing, and Fiona asked to speak to me. She didn't appear to look very well. She had lost weight and she shared with me that there was a lot of stuff that had gone on while I had been working at home and also while I'd been out of the picture. So I had no idea and found this all quite, it was quite shocking for me and hard — very difficult to take in.

C. So Fiona had said that, during that period in August 2013<sup>3</sup>, when Basil had shouted at me, it had affected her and that she felt that it would be good for me to go and talk to Carecall. Now I found this very difficult because I am a Christian and I felt that I had already dealt with the matter with Mr McCrea, you know, so we had drew a line in the sand so, you know, there was no way I wanted to revisit that. But the way I felt it was important for me to do this was because it had really had an effect on Fiona. So that was why I went.

DB: And when you agreed to go to Carecall, did you think you were going for, sort of, counselling or did you think you were going to give evidence in an inquiry?

KT: I felt I was going, actually — the Carecall process, through no fault of the girls who spoke to me, it turned out to be, I felt, I was left very vulnerable because I felt the whole process was about us, individually and very confidentially, sharing experiences and that processes would put in place, and it would be like a learning process for, you know, ourselves and, obviously, Mr McCrea would have a look at these different issues and he had a way of addressing them.

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<sup>3</sup> Please see email at page 17 where date corrected to April 2013

**A.** **DB:** And I think after you had spoken to someone at Carecall —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — and been interviewed, you decided that you didn't want, in fact, to continue with the process.

**KT:** Not — it didn't exactly happen so quickly as that. I went — I actually went back to see someone — and, again, I did this confidentially; nobody knew that I went back — and because there was something that I had said in my notes. Like I had used the word "sexual", and that had really played on my mind in relation to the screenshots of Ashleigh.

And how that came about was, on the day that I went to Carecall, I felt that I was the only one going to be there; that no one else, you know, that nobody — I didn't know who else was going to be coming forward. So there was someone else sitting there, and then my appointment was late, and the person who then I discovered was going to be making those sexual allegations was Ashleigh.

**B.** And Ashleigh started talking in front of me about different things that had gone on, and I think it got me kind of riled up a bit and, you know, I used that word, and I went back and asked them, "Look, I want you to remove that", because I realised that I used that word very inappropriate. I got caught up in the moment and I couldn't stand in a court and honestly say that word, and they said that they would do that.

**DB:** But I think, at some stage, at any rate, you withdrew from the Carecall process.

**KT:** I withdrew. I never told anybody, I suppose, that I withdrew. I withdrew because it was the time that I saw the report came out that was meant to be confidential. I think 'Sluggie O'Toole', and it was all about, you know, about the chair of NI21, about who authorised this, and I was very conscious that I didn't think — you know, that wasn't why I went in for it. I didn't want it out there. I didn't want the newspaper getting, you know, that wasn't why I did that.

**DB:** OK. And then I think you became aware of the complaints made against Mr McCrea through the media, presumably.

**C.** **KT:** Yes. Oh yes. Of course.

**DB:** And did you then write to me on 10 September —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — saying that you, any employment issues that I — Saying that any employment issues that you had had with Mr McCrea had been resolved?

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** To your satisfaction.

**KT:** Yes, very much so.

**DB:** Was any pressure put on you by anyone to write that letter?

**A. KT:** No. No. And there was never any pressure by anyone, even Fiona. Nobody put me under any pressure. I'm not in anybody's camps or side. I always feel I try to do the right thing.

**DB:** Now, as you'll appreciate, I've seen a large number of witnesses already.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** And some of them have given me the impression that Mr McCrea constantly shouted at you. It was a constant occurrence, and that you were reduced to a sort of nervous wreck by this conduct over a period of time. That seems not to be quite what you're describing to me.

**KT:** Well it was very, it was difficult during — you could do that on that period, but not — I wouldn't have lasted, Mr Bain, if I couldn't come in to do my work. During that period, it was difficult and upsetting for me, so it was.

**B. DB:** So, just so that I'm clear, we're really talking about the period of intense activity because of the —

**KT:** Exactly.

**DB:** — the resignation, leading to the setting up —

**KT:** Yes, it was all that time.

**DB:** — of the party.

**KT:** That's right, and Basil got disciplined, you know, and that was something that he brought out in our conversation that it was a really, really tough time for him.

**DB:** Can I ask you this: did you see conduct of Mr McCrea's towards any other staff that you regarded as unacceptable?

**KT:** No. I didn't.

**C. DB:** OK. Now, is there anything else you think would help me for my investigation to know about?

**KT:** For me, Mr Bain, I'm pretty heartbroken about it all because Mr McCrea — sorry, Basil and John; cos that's how I know them — Basil and John were like blood brothers. I mean, they were two characters up here, and, from my point of view, I'm pretty much heartbroken about the way the relationship has went. Pardon me. I hope through time that they will sort of speak. But, you know, Basil's not a bad person. He has made mistakes. We've all made mistakes, and I just would like to put it on the record that I know myself that I was given a second chance, so I think that's all I would like to say.

**DB:** OK. Well, thank you very much. That's been —

**KT:** No. Thank you.

**DB:** — very helpful.

**A. KT:** Thank you.

**DB:** The time is now 3.43, and we'll terminate this interview.

**KT:** Thank you very much.

Dear Douglas

Although the original transcript was correct, I have checked my dates and realised that the dates stated were incorrect.

Please can you change the following dates on my statement as below:

August 2013 on page 3 (B) to February 2013

August 2013 on page 3 (B) to April 2013

August 2013 on page 13 (C) to April 2013

Thank you.

Kindest regards

Karen

--

KAREN TABAHE

[REDACTED]

Working Hours

Tuesday 9am - 5pm

Wednesday 9am - 5pm

Office of Basil McCrea MLA

19 Market Square, Dromore, Co Down, BT25 1AW

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (2)

<b>Complaint Against:</b>	<b>Basil McCrea MLA</b>
<b>Witness:</b>	<b>Karen Tabahe</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>3 March 2015</b>
<b>Place:</b>	<b>Room 283, Parliament Buildings</b>
<b>Present:</b>	<b>Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner Karen Tabahe</b>
<b>Time Started:</b>	<b>2.00 pm</b>
<b>Time Ended:</b>	<b>2.18 pm</b>

**A. DB:** We're in business. Karen, thank you very much for coming to see me again.  
Can I remind you that you are still under oath?

**KT:** I am indeed. Thank you.

**DB:** As you'll see, we are recording this. At least, I hope we are.

**KT:** OK.

**DB:** There was one matter that I omitted to deal with when we met on 27 January,  
and I wonder if we could address that.

I think that you told me that you worked at the Lisburn office for roughly two weeks.

**B. KT:** Yes. Yes. That's correct.

**DB:** And that was in the second half of September/early October 2013.

**KT:** That's right. That's correct.

**DB:** I'm just trying to tie down the timeline. I understand that the first NI21 party  
conference, which was at the Europa.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** That was on 16 November 2013.

**C. KT:** That's right.

**DB:** So had you stopped working at Lisburn before that?

**KT:** Yes. Yes. Sorry. Yes.

**DB:** Any idea — Does it help you to tie down the time to think how long before that  
you had stopped?



**A. KT:** I would've been, I would've been in the Lisburn office from about — I know the exact date — I have them in my wee diary. I think about the third week of September until, basically, the beginning of October. And how I can remember, cos I was at a wedding in the Middle East for nearly two weeks in October.

**DB:** Right.

**KT:** And when I came back, I would've been working from home. So that's how I can remember.

**DB:** Now, can I ask you to look at a document? I don't know if you've seen it before. This is an invitation letter — we're looking at a document marked BM14 — and I think that's an invitation to the party conference.

**B. KT:** Yes.

**DB:** Were you involved in any way with doing drafts of that letter for Mr McCrea?

**KT:** No. No, I wouldn't have. No.

**DB:** Now, then, the area I'm interested in is these letters, and you may be able to help me a little bit. My understanding is that these letters were to be posted out to people who either were party members or who had shown an interest in joining the party.

**KT:** OK.

**C. DB:** Do you ever recall taking part in or hearing any discussion about how the postage for these was to be paid for?

**KT:** No. No. No. Definitely not. Because, as I said to you in my previous statement, I wasn't really very much involved with the NI21 issue because I was still sort of carrying on as before the things that I would've done for Basil, including constituent issues as well. I would've dealt with that so I wouldn't have been involved. That was all done. I wouldn't have been aware of the NI21 stuff, Mr Bain.

A. DB: You see, I've been told that, during the period you were at Lisburn, Mr McCrea instructed Ashleigh Murray to address Assembly prepaid envelopes, to send out —

KT: I wasn't present. I wasn't there when that was done. When I was there, as I think I said earlier as well, Ashleigh wasn't always there when I would've been in the office, cos, sometimes, she would've been, I presume, doing things at the student unions, but I was never — I never addressed any of the — You'd know my handwriting.

DB: I just wanted to be clear for the tape.

B. KT: Yes.

DB: Because you replied to that: I wasn't there when that was done.

KT: Yes.

DB: Do you know whether Mr McCrea told Ashleigh to address any envelopes or not?

KT: I did not hear Mr McCrea say that to Ashleigh.

DB: Were you ever involved in helping Mr McCrea with compiling his office cost expenditure claim?

C. KT: No. No. I wouldn't have done that. It would've been [REDACTED] out of the Dromore office.

DB: What's [REDACTED] second name?

KT: [REDACTED] She's [REDACTED] [REDACTED] did his expenses.

DB: You see, what I've been told is that Mr McCrea instructed Ashleigh Murray to write out Assembly prepaid envelopes for these invitations, and that you, Kirsty McClay and Ashleigh Murray all told him that he couldn't use his office cost expenditure for that purpose.

- A. **KT:** I don't remember that ever happening, Mr Bain. Because I would've been in my timescale — I don't know when those letters went out, but because, in the August-time, I was off on holidays at the end of August and, when I came back in September, I was only out really for about two weeks, and I had nothing to do with it, even the event, I actually wasn't sure if I was even meant to go that day and I just went and ended up being on a desk signing people in, but I had nothing to do with the invitations. I didn't post any.

**DB:** Is it possible that you've forgotten telling Mr McCrea that he couldn't use office cost expenditure for that purpose?

- B. **KT:** It wouldn't have been something — I wouldn't have been — I'm not very politically minded, and I wouldn't know all the rules. I wouldn't be shrewd, if that's right, to know that you're meant to do that or you're not meant to do that.

**DB:** So the fact is actually that you couldn't have said it because you didn't know whether or not he could've used them or not?

**KT:** I wasn't involved in sending out the letters, so I wasn't. You know, if he had of asked me can you get that typed up or put them in envelopes, I wasn't involved in the procedure, so I wasn't.

- C. **DB:** So if someone had told you they had said to Mr McCrea words to the effect, "You can't use Assembly for that purpose" —

**KT:** I don't —

**DB:** No —

**KT:** Sorry.

**DB:** If someone has told me that, are they, at best, mistaken or, alternatively, telling untruths?

A. **KT:** I wasn't, I wasn't — Normally when we would've done things, we would've been sort of in teams or brought together, and I would've known — like if I had of put information into envelopes and sent them off, or if I was told that was being done, I feel I would've remembered that, and I don't remember ever saying to Mr McCrea about his office cost allowance, simply because I never dealt with anything to do with the office costs. Now, at times, if there was something I was unsure about, I would have asked [REDACTED] or I would've rang the — look are you allowed to do this — but I don't recall that, Mr Bain.

**DB:** That's very helpful. Then can I just ask you a little bit about stationery requisitions?

B. **KT:** OK.

**DB:** My understanding is that, if an MLA needs stationery —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — or other office consumables, he has to sign a requisition form.

**KT:** Yes. That's correct.

**DB:** But I assume Mr McCrea didn't actually complete the forms himself.

C. **KT:** That's right.

**DB:** Someone else did.

**KT:** That's right. I — Mr McCrea would've signed it. I would've checked with [REDACTED] what was in the budget, and whatever we needed to order, I would've got.

**DB:** And certainly, at one stage, Mr McCrea had three offices. There was one in Parliament Buildings.

**KT:** I know.

**DB:** One in Dromore.

A.     **KT:** That's right.

**DB:** And one in Lisburn.

**KT:** Yes. That's correct.

**DB:** So did each office — was a separate requisition completed for each office or did you do a consolidated form?

**KT:** I probably just ordered what we needed rather than say, "That's for Lisburn. That's for Dromore.", if that's what you mean. You know, I would've got, if [REDACTED] maybe might've asked for envelopes, I would've got envelopes and then I would've put them in the back of Basil's car the next time he was in Dromore to give the stationery. So that's how I would've done it.

B.     **DB:** But, for example, if they needed 500 envelopes at Lisburn —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — and they needed 1,000 at Dromore —

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** — would you have put in one requisition for 500 and one for 1,000 or would you have put them together and asked for 1,500?

C.     **KT:** I really don't recall ordering the envelopes at that time.

**DB:** No, no, at any time.

**KT:** No, I wouldn't have said, "That's for Dromore office" or "That's for Lisburn office".

**DB:** So you would have phoned round to see what people needed.

A. **KT:** Yes. People would've emailed me. That would've been the procedure when I worked with Basil from the beginning; [REDACTED] would've just sent me an email to say, "Karen, I need this, that or the other". Because I would've been going out to the Lisburn office — not the one in Daltons, the one in Hillsborough Road when we had that — I would've brought the stationery out there that was for use there.

**DB:** And then there were certain items that would be delivered out to the offices. I think paper and envelopes and one or two other things had to be collected from the stationery store. Is that right?

B. **KT:** I would've collected — yes, I would've always gone down if we needed ink cartridges. I would've collected it and brought it up and then Basil would've took it out to the Dromore office because he would've had appointments there.

I hope I'm making myself clear to you, Mr Bain.

**DB:** No, no, you are. This is very helpful.

**KT:** So, basically, what would've happened, because I've worked with so many different people in the sense, when it was just sort of really [REDACTED] and I, because [REDACTED] would've asked me, "Karen, I need envelopes", the Assembly envelopes, if she needed ink, well it depended, say certain things I would've then gathered that up. I wouldn't have said on the form it was for the Lisburn office or the Dromore office, and then put it in Basil's car and Basil would've taken it.

C. **DB:** So did you do all of the collections from the stationery store?

**KT:** Yes. Yes, but not — Yes, I would've done the collections. What I ordered, I would've collected.

**DB:** So, you see, I am told, in relation to, going back to these invitations —

**KT:** OK. Right.

**DB:** And I know you don't know about them.

**KT:** OK. I know.

**A. DB:** But I just want you to hear this version.

**KT:** Right. OK.

**DB:** That Ashleigh Murray herself ordered up envelopes from the stationery store, and —

**KT:** OK. Right. Sorry.

**DB:** Now, the first question on that is Mr McCrea would've had to sign that.

**KT:** Yes.

**B. DB:** So she couldn't just order them up herself.

**KT:** Well, I would've got — I would've had some, because I would've got Mr McCrea to sign a form and then I photocopied that form, so there could've been blank, you know, stationery forms but with Mr McCrea's signature on it so that we could get stationery. So Basil may not always have been aware.

**DB:** Would Ashleigh Murray have had these blank signed forms?

**C. KT:** Well they were in the office, so it was like everything else; people knew where they were. I had a cupboard behind Mr McCrea's where forms were kept if people sort of needed them, but, generally, I would've got the stationery when I was working.

**DB:** And then —

**KT:** Which would've been — Can I just? Which would've been, cos I would've been up there Mondays and Tuesdays. I wasn't there Wednesdays and Thursdays. I was out in Lisburn.

A. **DB:** Of course. And then, according to Ashleigh Murray's account, she came personally and collected these envelopes from the stationery store.

**KT:** That could've happened. She may have done that if she ordered them. So, on the form, if you could get the form, I think I would normally put my name or they would know it was me that was going down because you have to put your room number and sign.

**DB:** Just bear with me one second.

Can I ask you to look at three documents?

B. **KT:** Yes.

**DB:** TR2, TR3 and TR4.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** I think these are stationery requisitions for Mr McCrea.

**KT:** Yes.

**DB:** Do you know if you completed any of these?

C. **KT:** It's — It's — Hold on. That's not my writing. That's not my writing, Mr Bain.

**DB:** Do you know whose it is?

**KT:** I don't know whose it is.

**DB:** I think, just for the record, you are looking at TR2.

**KT:** Yes. No, I don't know whose writing that is.

**DB:** Could you?



A.     **KT:** You see, it is a different signature, you know, there. Normally, what I would do is, I would write Basil's name there and then he just had to print it. I also wrote the date as well. I would need to check the date.

**DB:** Well —

**KT:** Oh, is that OK? Sorry. That's not important, is it?

**DB:** Well, then, TR3: is that your handwriting?

**KT:** No, that's not. I can write, if you'd like to see my writing.

B.     **DB:** Just for completeness. TR4.

**KT:** No. That's not my writing. Is that 3 December '13?

**DB:** Yes.

**KT:** Again, I don't know if I was even working that day. But I'm happy to, if you want to see my writing.

**DB:** No. It's not material.

C.     **KT:** I don't know whose writing that is.

**DB:** So, if I've understood this correctly, the normal practice was that you would submit the stationery requisitions on behalf of Mr McCrea.

**KT:** Yes. That's correct.

**DB:** But you can't exclude the possibility that Ashleigh Murray obtained a form, signed by Mr —

**KT:** Or anyone.

A. DB: — McCrea. Well we'll stay with her. Obtained a form that had a photocopy of Mr McCrea's signature.

KT: Yes.

DB: And submitted it.

KT: Yes.

DB: Just for one item.

KT: Yes.

B. DB: And I suppose, in that case, the Assembly would have a record of that.

KT: Yes. I feel so because, whenever they — when I put that in, they get me to sign something. I'm sure they do now. Cos it's room number. Maybe it's just Basil's; maybe it is — cos I haven't done stationery for such — And they've changed the way they do it. But — *inaudible* — August '13 that was done. Does it matter? OK.

If I can explain to you, what I would've done is, whenever the new system came out, I would've got Basil to sign a master one and then I would've photocopied so we had a few spare, so if [REDACTED] rang me, then I could go down and get what she needed, and if we needed anything for the Lisburn office.

C. So, you see, it would've been mainly me dealing with it when it was in the UUP. But then, I wasn't involved in a lot of the things in NI21.

DB: OK. Thank you very much. Is there anything else you'd like to say?

KT: No. Thank you.

DB: OK, if I can work out how to stop this. The time is now 2.18, and we started around 2 o'clock.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Date:** 8 December 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Basil McCrea

**Time Started:** 11.01 am

**Time Ended:** 11.48 am

**A. Douglas Bain:** This is an interview with Basil McCrea MLA taking place in room 283, Parliament Buildings on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The time is 11.01 am. Present are Douglas Bain, the Standards Commissioner; [REDACTED], note-taker; and –

**Basil McCrea:** Basil McCrea MLA.

**Douglas Bain:** Thank you very much. As you'll see, Mr McCrea, we're recording this, and in due course you'll get a copy of the transcript. Before starting the interview, can I confirm that you've received from me a notice outlining the procedure to be followed for the investigation –

**B. Basil McCrea:** Yes I have.

**Douglas Bain:** – and drawing attention to various offences?

**Basil McCrea:** Indeed.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, as I explained, when I contacted you, today I'm only going to deal with certain allegations of financial impropriety, and it'll be necessary, I'm sure, to see you at a later date in connection with other allegations against you.

**C. Douglas Bain:** Can I deal first of all with an allegation, made by Ashleigh Murray that whilst she was working for you at your Lisburn constituency office, you instructed her to send out approximately 300 invitations using Assembly headed notepaper and prepaid envelopes, which she asserts were in breach of the rules concerning the use of office cost expenditure? And can I just take you through my understanding of the position? It's correct, isn't it, that in September 2013, Ashleigh Murray was working at your constituency office in Lisburn?

**Basil McCrea:** Yes, that's correct.

**Douglas Bain:** At any time around September 2013 did you instruct her to type up and issue approximately 300 invitations?

**Basil McCrea:** No, I did not do that, and I would not do that.

**A. Douglas Bain:** Have you any idea what she might be referring to?

**Basil McCrea:** Yes, I have copies of the envelopes with me.

**Douglas Bain:** And could you let me see one of them?

**Basil McCrea:** What I – I –

**Douglas Bain:** Oh, you've got a whole bundle. And just so as we're clear, these are Northern Ireland Assembly prepaid first-class envelopes, and they all have been addressed in manuscript and the addresses have been blanked off by sticky labels.

**B. Basil McCrea:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** So – so they could be used properly.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** And who are the various people to whom they were originally addressed?

**Basil McCrea:** Well, these – and you could peel back the labels to see, of course, but these are the invitations to the party conference.

**C. Douglas Bain:** Right. So these were all to party members or people who wanted to attend –

**Basil McCrea:** People – we didn't have a party really, at that stage, but these were people that would have been invited. But obviously, because I have them – and the reason why I've got these – we're sort of going a little bit backwards. I'll take you through the chronology, but these envelopes were found in my office when Ms Murray left. They were not utilised in any way, but because they were taken – my staff have over-stickered them and continued to use them for proper business, but I had no knowledge about these envelopes until after Ms Murray left.

- A. **Douglas Bain:** And it would be right, wouldn't it, that using prepaid envelopes – Assembly prepaid envelopes – for the purpose for which these were going to be used by Ms Murray would have been a breach of the rules?

**Basil McCrea:** I am fully aware of that. Ms Murray would have been fully aware of that. At no time did I talk to her about this issue or ask her to do this work - and these envelopes were not used. No invitations were sent out. No headed paper was used either as I will demonstrate as we go through with evidence.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. I've been told that Ms Murray had to make a special trip to the Assembly stationery store to collect the 300 first-class prepaid envelopes and headed paper.

- B. I wonder if you can help me on this, but I've had the benefit of looking at your stationery requisitions for the relevant period and perhaps, just so as we've got it on the record, you could look at a document that I've labelled TR1, which is a note by [REDACTED] where I think on the reverse page of that, he summarises the envelopes issued to you in the period from August through to December 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes, and are these 100s?

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** OK.

- C. **Douglas Bain:** And – you see, I find it difficult to reconcile that, which shows three issues, each of 100, with what I've been told – that Ms Murray collected 300 or more on a single occasion.

**Basil McCrea:** Correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And does [REDACTED]'s record accord with your recollection of the amount of stationery you would be using?

**Basil McCrea:** We wouldn't use a lot of stationery, but I can say categorically that Ms Murray was not instructed, authorised or in any shape or form to go and collect any envelopes. I will provide you with an invoice from Lyreco.

**A. Douglas Bain:** Now this is an invoice from Lyreco with a tax point of 31 October 2013 –

**Basil McCrea:** And with a delivery date –

**Douglas Bain:** Somewhere.

**Basil McCrea:** Delivery date such and such on the twenty-fifth of the tenth.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**B. Basil McCrea:** For, as you can see, 500 white envelopes.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** So these were purchased by my staff, paid for by the party for the sending out of envelopes – of invitations.

**C. Douglas Bain:** Right.

**Basil McCrea:** So this is –

**Douglas Bain:** When you say invitations, was that invitations to the party conference?

**Basil McCrea:** To – to the party conference. So we had bought from external suppliers, for the absence of doubt, 500 white manila envelopes.

- A. **Douglas Bain:** If it's right that Ms Murray addressed these other bundle of envelopes which you've shown me, that are now blanked out for reuse – if she'd addressed them sometime around September 2013, there must have been some conversation with her by someone, saying, "For goodness' sake, don't send these out. We need to send them out on ones paid for by the party."

**Basil McCrea:** As I will show you shortly – I don't know if this works in the correct way, but where I would be leading up to would be to this email from Annette Holden.

- B. **Douglas Bain:** And Annette Holden was someone working for Mr McCallister at the time?.

**Basil McCrea:** Is – is working for Mr McCallister, and you can see that in her email, which is sent to Ashleigh Murray and Kirsty McClay, who still works for me – this is why I have a copy of it. But note that I was not copied in on this email.

**Douglas Bain:** And this is suggesting to them that the cost of the envelopes and the postage would be met from office costs expenditure.

- C. **Basil McCrea:** Mr McCallister's office cost allowances.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** - stating that the party had no funds for either postage or envelopes, but as I will provide evidence to you, Commissioner, we did purchase headed paper, invitations, envelopes and stamps, and that I had no knowledge about the activity that Ms Murray was engaged in, that appears to have been directed on the basis of this email, from Mr McCallister's office. And you can see that she responded – Ms Murray responds at that time – the date, if you notice, is, I think – is it the twenty –

**Douglas Bain:** 24<sup>th</sup>.



- A. **Basil McCrea:** And you'll notice that that is in keeping perhaps with other dates. So that is when Ms Murray will have had the instruction – or maybe the idea. So she's looking to get proper address labels from Stormont stationery, but I stress that I was not copied in to this email. I had no knowledge of it. At no time did I talk to Ashleigh Murray about this.

**Douglas Bain:** I mean, you may not be able to help me on this, Mr McCrea, but, I mean, plainly at – having received this, Ms Murray – the intention was to issue the invitations on headed notepaper and using Stormont prepaid prepaid envelopes. At some stage she didn't do that. Have you any idea why she didn't do that?

- B. **Basil McCrea:** That is because Ms Murray – this is round about the twenty, um, fourth, but Ms Murray left employment on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Douglas Bain:** Right, so it didn't happen because of time – you suspect.

**Basil McCrea:** Had I known that she was doing it, I would have absolutely stopped it. It is quite categoric that we would not do that, and as you will see, Commissioner, I will be able to provide you with receipts for stamps that we bought.

- C. So we were absolutely clear that this would not happen, because, as you can imagine, if you were sending out to 500 people, in, uh, Assembly, uh, prepaid envelopes with Assembly headed paper, you only needed one person to come forward and say that this is an inappropriate use of expenditure, and this would not have been a good start to a party conference. And I can tell you categorically, I did not – would not – do such a thing. And I've gone to extreme, uh, uh, uh, documentation to make sure that that is not the case.

**Douglas Bain:** And just so as we've got it in the transcript, the – the, uh, email chain that we're referring to is, uh, headed "NI21 conference invitations/letters". And it's – starts off with the first – is a – email from Annette Holden to Kirsty McClay, that is, and Ashleigh, which is Ashleigh Murray –

**A. Basil McCrea:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** – on – on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** And replied to by Ashleigh Murray.

**Douglas Bain:** Indeed, on the same – the same day, within a few moments.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes.

**B. Douglas Bain:** OK. I don't think I, uh, need to ask you any more about this particular aspect.

**Basil McCrea:** Would you mind, just for the record, just because this might be helpful to you – just that this is a letter from ICON Creative confirming that these are the leaflets for the headed paper. And I'll supply you with the invoice that we paid for, as you can see here, reference "design and print 500 letters and 1,500 invitations".

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**C. Basil McCrea:** I'll supply you with a copy of the printed letter that went out, obviously not on Assembly headed paper – on our own headed paper. I'll supply you with a copy – this is the proof of the actual invitation. It's not the actual invitation. It's the printer's proof.

**Douglas Bain:** OK.

**Basil McCrea:** I supply you with the statement from the treasurer, saying that these invoices were paid on the date from party funds, not from OCA. I have already given you the copy of the invoice for the 500 white envelopes, which ties up with the 500 printed invitations.

**Douglas Bain:** Indeed.

**A. Basil McCrea:** I supply you with an email chain which might just take a wee bit of time to read through, it's between Annette Holden and Kirsty McClay, about repayment of – of stamps.

**Douglas Bain:** Indeed, I see that. There's an email from Kirsty McClay to Annette Holden on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014 saying that she has receipts for the stamps from the invitations.

**Basil McCrea:** And if you just want to turn – turn it over, just so that you've got the complete bit, it's just them talking about, "We'll get them to sort it."

**B. Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** And the final piece of information that I can give to you is confirmation that, for the stamps, the cheque number for the remuneration of the stamps used to send out the invitation was paid by the party on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 14, cheque number 19, to the value of £41.50. So I submit, Commissioner, that I've been fully open and transparent.

**Douglas Bain:** You are. I'm very grateful. These will be of great assistance.

**C. Basil McCrea:** Just to be absolutely certain, I had no knowledge that these activities – had it – had there been any communication whatsoever in the run-up about this, I would of course immediately stopped it. But I didn't – I was not copied in and we were making alternative arrangements for which I had put funding in place.

**Douglas Bain:** Did you ever find any letters – invitations that Ashleigh Murray had run off?

**Basil McCrea:** No. I think it was just envelopes, because she would have been waiting, I presume, for some copy. But I just didn't see them. I don't know where – but they were absolutely not put out, so there was nothing in that.

- A. **Douglas Bain:** OK. Then can we move on, and I think, if you bear with me while I go through the documents, we can probably be fairly brief on this point. And this concerns an alleged payment to Ashleigh Murray by you of £500. And I've had the benefit of looking at some of the documentation, so perhaps if we go through it –

**Basil McCrea:** Certainly.

**Douglas Bain:** – My understanding is that when Ms Murray originally started with you, she was working at Stormont as a volunteer.

- B. **Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And during the time she was a volunteer, did you pay her at all?

**Basil McCrea:** No, but I did give her the sum of £30 on 1 July, and it's a bit, Commissioner – some text messages from Ashleigh Murray, in the weeks before that, you can see they're date stamped. Just her explaining that she was having difficulty getting to work, doing whatever – being a volunteer. And – so – but it does show that she was not in great shape financially, but a series of emails where she explains her difficulties to me.

- C. **Douglas Bain:** OK. Thank you. Then my understanding is that she started work in a paid capacity on 15 July 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And – and can I show you a document, TR7, which is authority to pay secretarial salaries? And I think that that confirms the date of 15 July 2013 and gives Ms Murray's bank details.

**Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And the purpose for that plainly was because payments to her were going to be through the Assembly payroll and direct into her bank.

**A. Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And can I ask you –

**Basil McCrea:** And can I also just draw your attention, since we're on that, to –

**Douglas Bain:** I'm just going to come to that document, in fact.

**Basil McCrea:** OK.

**B. Douglas Bain:** Can I show – show you that you have a copy of it, uh, numbered TR9, which is the statements of particulars under the Employment Rights Order for Ashleigh Murray? And do you see at paragraph 2 of the document – or heading 2 – “employment commenced on 15 July 2013”?

**Basil McCrea:** This is – yes, I see that, and that is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And paragraph 6 – the place of employment is Lisburn constituent office.

**C. Basil McCrea:** That's correct.

**Douglas Bain:** I take it that's meant to be constituency office.

**Basil McCrea:** It is.

**Douglas Bain:** And in paragraph 7, uh, the remuneration is £6.90 an hour. And if we go over the page, still in the same paragraph, “you'll be paid monthly in arrears by BACS on the third working day prior to month end.”

**Basil McCrea:** That's correct.

- A. Douglas Bain:** Then may I take you now to a document TR5? It's a document you won't have seen before, which is, uh – which is taken from the Assembly records. It's a payment history for Ashleigh Murray. And does that show that her first pay was on 28 August 2013?

**Basil McCrea:** It does.

**Douglas Bain:** And it included arrears of £441.29 for the period 15 July to 31 July 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** Correct.

- B. Douglas Bain:** So in other words, she started in mid-July, and she had six weeks before she got paid, just because of the way the payroll works.

**Basil McCrea:** That is exactly correct, Commissioner.

**Douglas Bain:** And did you, uh, help her out, uh, to cover her for the period when she wasn't going to get any pay?

**Basil McCrea:** Uh, yes, I – I did, Commissioner. I was on holiday from the period of 17 July to 30 July. I think that's the right dates, actually, that I've got. And I was still in contact with the office, and there was some problem with Ashleigh being able to carry on financially.

- C.** So I arranged, remotely – I was on holiday, for three cheques to be drawn from my constituency account, which is managed by [REDACTED] for £183. That would be an advance on her – until she got paid. But that was an advance because it – there was a long time before she would get paid money.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, were you – at this time, were you in direct contact at all with Ashleigh Murray?

**Basil McCrea:** I did get a text message back from her, saying thank you for the cheque.

A. I don't recall that I was talking personally, but I did get acknowledgement from the cheque – that she had received the cheques, and I can supply you with evidence of that.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, I mean, you were very clear in your mind that this was an advance, to be recovered when she got paid by – through the Assembly.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes indeed. And so, indeed, was Ms Murray, because I can provide you with an email to that.

**Douglas Bain:** Well, that would be helpful.

B. **Basil McCrea:** So this is an email on 18 –

**Douglas Bain:** Yes, 18 September 2013, from Ashleigh Murray to you and –

**Basil McCrea:** Various other –

**Douglas Bain:** – a number of others.

**Basil McCrea:** – people.

C. **Douglas Bain:** And it says, “on 28 August 2013 I was overpaid in my wages of £400. I will pay this back at the rate of £50 per month, start date of 26 September 2013.” And then, attached to it is an email from you to Suzanne Chalkley, setting out the correct position that Ashleigh Murray was given an advance.

**Basil McCrea:** And so, Commissioner, I took immediate action to go and find out, what was happening. So this is an email chain – not all of the commentary is actually relevant, Commissioner, but if you read through, it's to [REDACTED] who was the person that issued the – so it's just showing, “Can you get statements? Can you show me when this was paid? How much was it?” and suchlike. And if you read through, there's an email chain there.

**A. Douglas Bain:** I mean, cutting it short, is there any – could any reasonable person have thought that you were making a gift of £500 to Ashleigh Murray?

**Basil McCrea:** No. And even in the – the position that you had, they – they double counted, because they say that I gave her a personal cheque for over £500, which I did not. I mean, it's – you know, I didn't. I did give her three cheques for £183 later on, but they seem to have included that twice in their position.

I will just show, Commissioner that I did get, forwarded from Suzanne Chalkley, who I had asked to look into this on the twenty-seventh, an email from Ashleigh Murray, which it says she's included her payslip. If I draw the Commissioner's attention to the payslip, it clearly shows salary, back pay – and with her email of saying "I was overpaid," you know, she clearly knew that this was not some sort of generosity.

**B. Douglas Bain:** And did she ever, in fact, repay the £500?

**Basil McCrea:** No. She did not. There was – there – if I can show – because it's put in in some detail, I can actually show you the payments and how they came about, because people are making allegations that Mrs Chalkley gave me money in cash and so on. If you would just bear with me, Commissioner, this will be very brief.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes, certainly.

**C. Basil McCrea:** So this is just an email that I got from, uh, [REDACTED] of payroll –

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** – just to show you that I was being open and transparent, and that they – the information that you've already supplied me with – they had sent me this – this is before I had, of course, sight of her payslip, but just to say to you that I was open and transparent and went to the payroll and said, "Is this the issue?" So – so then this –

**Douglas Bain:** Sorry, so as we can identify this one later –



**A. Basil McCrea:** Sorry.

**Douglas Bain:** This here – you're referring me to an email from yourself to Suzanne Chalkley on 2 October 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** It might, Commissioner – it might be the other way round. Oh no, it is – oh yes, sorry, Commissioner. You were right. From me to Suzanne Chalkley regarding the Assembly confirmation.

**B. Douglas Bain:** And a note by [REDACTED] of the Assembly pay team which was sent to you, and that's date 30 September 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes. I then, Commissioner, wish to show you another email from Suzanne Chalkley to Ashleigh Murray, in which I'm cc'd. And you will note, for the absence of doubt, that clearly – I'll let you read it, and then you can –

**Douglas Bain:** Yes, there were – this is an email from Suzanne Chalkley to Ashleigh Murray, and copied to you on 2 October 2013. Essentially, it explains to Ashleigh that there was no overpayment by the Assembly.

**C.** It's simply a back pay for the days in July that she hadn't been paid for till the end of October, and setting out the information on the three cheques of £183, making a total of £549, received from your constituency account, and acknowledging receipt of the first repayment of £50 by Ashleigh Murray on 28 September 2013. Was there a standing order or direct debit set up for repayment of that?

**Basil McCrea:** Yes there was, Commissioner.

**Douglas Bain:** – balance?

**Basil McCrea:** So I supply a letter from Danske Bank, and this is a recent letter, actually, just in preparation for the meeting with you, sir. But you'll notice that Danske Bank confirm that there were two payments.

- A.** I'll explain this cheque in a moment, Commissioner, but there were two payments set up by standing order. One for £60 on 1 November and the other was for £30 on 2 December. But after that, there was no further payment. I stress that I was not involved in this transaction, in the sense that I didn't negotiate it. This was between Suzanne Chalkley and Ms Murray. And, Suzanne Chalkley says, "Yes, I acknowledge that I got £50 in cash. Suggest that you set up a standing order." Which was actioned, but then stopped. And you'll notice that Ashleigh Murray's last working day was November 1.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes. And then there's this cheque dated 4 October 2013.

- B. Basil McCrea:** Yes. And this cheque – whenever we were looking at our bank statements – is just for records. This has got Ashleigh Murray's name against it, but it's because she lodged that cheque. It was only when we went to the bank and said, "Well, was this an additional cheque that she put in, because her name was against it?" They said, "No, she lodged the cheque, but it was actually from an account of [REDACTED] and that was his membership fees."

**Douglas Bain:** So this is actually irrelevant.

**Basil McCrea:** It's actually irrelevant. It's just in case anybody was looking and said, "Well, wasn't there three?"

- C. Douglas Bain:** OK. That's helpful.

**Basil McCrea:** But the – the two – the statements about the standing orders are relevant and factually correct. And, Commissioner, I have only – you may have more.

**Douglas Bain:** No, no.

**Basil McCrea:** I've only two more things to – to – to show to you. This is not strictly relevant, but I just offer it because it's in the last piece, this is dated 28 October.

**Douglas Bain:** yes.

**A. Basil McCrea:** 28 October.

**Douglas Bain:** Yeah.

**Basil McCrea:** And it's – it's Ashleigh Murray again attempting to reorganise her contract. Remember, she's here on a fixed-term six-month contract. And we had already made accommodation to try and help her with her buses to get to the places and – we have had difficulties with timekeeping. But this is just to show you that this was the way that she was thinking – that, you know, it just wasn't possible to run in this way, but that's on the twenty-eighth, and she left on the first.

**Douglas Bain:** OK.

**B. Basil McCrea:** And my final piece of information for you, Commissioner – I don't know if it's of use, but this is a text message from Ashleigh Murray to me. I did not get any formal notification. I was in the constituency office on 1 November. I actually went and did some business with Ashleigh Murray up until lunchtime in the constituency on men's health matters. When I came back I was told that she had left employment and started the following Monday. So I did get an email exchange, and you can see from this, – "Thank you so much for everything. You took a chance on me when I... I'll never forget it." Well, what else could I say but, "I'm glad that I did." I think that's the only thing that I have for you.

**C. Douglas Bain:** And I think I've got – I've got that one already, but it's useful –

**Basil McCrea:** Sorry. Well –

**Douglas Bain:** – and that's an email on Friday 1 November 2013. Just going back to the – this £500, then. There were, um, one payment to – made to Suzanne Chalkley, and then –

**Basil McCrea:** Of £50.

**Douglas Bain:** – and then two by the bank, one for £60 and one for £30, were they?

**Basil McCrea:** That's correct, yes.

A. **Douglas Bain:** And the balance remains outstanding.

**Basil McCrea:** Correct.

**Douglas Bain:** Thank you. Now – and then we come to the third allegation made, and that is that you attempted to obtain office costs expenditure by deception, essentially, through a pay increase for Jamie Mackrell. And can I – just to put it in context, can we go through some of my documents first?

**Basil McCrea:** Certainly. Of course.

B. **Douglas Bain:** Uh, can you look at a document TR, uh, 14, which is the statements of particulars for the Employment Rights Order for Mr Mackrell. And I think that shows that he started for you on 1 June 2011.

**Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And at that stage you were a UUP MLA.

**Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And am I right in thinking that he remained employed with you when you became, first of all, an independent, and then an NI21 MLA?

C. **Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And does paragraph 8 of – of that document show that, when he started, he was on four hours – on 16 hours a week, that is, four hours on each of Monday to Thursday?

**Basil McCrea:** That is correct.

**Douglas Bain:** And then, if I can show you document TR11, which is an amendment to the secretarial salaries and employment details for Mr Mackrell. Does that show that from 2 July 2012 his hours were increased from 16 to 40?

**A. Basil McCrea:** Correct. This is because he had finished work as a student and was now going into full-time employment.

**Douglas Bain:** I've been told by the experts in the Assembly pay team that his hourly rate increased from £7 to £7.08.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes, that –

**Douglas Bain:** – uh, which they think is simply because of the rounding way that it's worked out.

**Basil McCrea:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** Was there extra work that he had to take on during these extra hours?

**B. Basil McCrea:** It was really just more of the same. He was working in the constituency, just talking to more people. Going round door-to-door canvassing, just saying, "I'm here on behalf of Basil McCrea. Is there anything we can help you with?" and things like that.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, Mr Mackrell says that you approached him at the time of this change to his hours, and said that the increase in his hourly rate, which he says was around £1, was to be kept by him in a separate account and then paid to you when you asked for it for expenses. Leaving aside the fact that it appears that his increase in his hourly rate was 8p rather than £1, is there any substance in that at all?

**C. Basil McCrea:** Absolutely no substance whatsoever. His hours were increased because he was no longer a student. His hours before had been designed so that it could fit in with his studies which were in journalism and it helped in terms of what I was doing. There was no increase, there was no cash. I deny absolutely the allegations. I would not do such a thing.

**Douglas Bain:** Um, can you think of any – is there anything that could have led Mr Mackerel to think that you were proposing some kind of deal – that he misunderstood what you were saying to him?

**A. Basil McCrea:** I can't imagine. The only thing that I can show you is that Mr Mackrell left on good terms, thanking me for the opportunity. Again, with not much notice, but if I just show you that it was all done – what he said –

**Douglas Bain:** This is an email from Mr Mackrell to you on 30 April 2013. It's giving notice and saying, "It's been two great years working as part of your team. I've always been a big supporter, and hope to see you and the new party get the success that it deserves." So, clearly no ill feelings.

**Basil McCrea:** And did some work elsewhere, but you'll see this is another email inviting me out to his leaving do.

**B. Douglas Bain:** And that's the email of 21 August 2013.

**Basil McCrea:** So you can see clearly, at that stage there was no problems of any shape. And, just to show some messages showing some contact – "things are going well, keep in touch" – that's the only thing I can say.

**Douglas Bain:** And this is various emails, the first one of 14 May 2013, between yourself and Mr Mackrell.

**Basil McCrea:** Text messages, actually.

**C. Douglas Bain:** Sorry, text messages.

**Basil McCrea:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** You see, Mr Mackrell told me last week that in fact he had put money aside and that he'd given money to you on two or three occasions – a total sum of £70 or £80. Was there ever occasions that -

**Basil McCrea:** At no time –

**Douglas Bain:** – he gave you money?

**Basil McCrea:** At no time did Mr Mackrell give me money.

**A. Douglas Bain:** I mean, could he be mistaken about that?

**Basil McCrea:** He did not, at any time, give me money. I mean, it's just preposterous that you would do such a thing for £70 or £80. I'm only using that figure, Commissioner, because you have proffered it to me. The fact that he says that his pay went up by £1 shows – it did not – you know, it did not go up by £1. His hours were increased, as per the agreement, because he was going onto full-time. He worked those hours – the full hours. You know, he got paid for 40 hours. He worked 40 hours. And that, as far as I'm aware, was the totality of the financial relationship.

**B. Douglas Bain:** Well, you see, the slight difficulty I have, Mr McCrea, is that you've told me that he left on good terms, and had –

**Basil McCrea:** Mm-hmm.

**Douglas Bain:** – a good working relationship throughout and yet he makes this allegation, for which you say there's no basis. In fact you're almost forced to the conclusion that he's deliberately lying.

**Basil McCrea:** I've tried to be quite measured in my discussions with you, but I have pointed out, Commissioner, that there are a lot of factual inaccuracies in the information that has been supplied to you by various parties.

**C.** And I can also say to you that the people that are making these allegations appear to be very friendly and closely connected, and that's for you to draw your own conclusions. I don't know if I want to say anything on the record, but I have pointed out various issues to you.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. Thank you. And, I mean, would I be right in thinking if an MLA wished to extract money from office costs expenditure, the method that Mr Mackrell says you favoured would have been a very ineffective way of doing it, because you'd have had to bear tax and national insurance.



A. **Basil McCrea:** It would just be the wrong way to do anything. Not that I would do it, but it's the wrong way to do anything, as I think other events have shown in the television, and things like that, you know –

**Douglas Bain:** I mean, you could, for example, have put in an invoice for research.

**Basil McCrea:** Absolutely.

**Douglas Bain:** Not – not you, but any MLA –

**Basil McCrea:** Yes.

B. **Douglas Bain:** That would have been a much easier way of fiddling the –

**Basil McCrea:** There are much –

**Douglas Bain:** – system.

**Basil McCrea:** I was actually trying to give people a start. There were some difficulties, though, as you said, we left in good terms. It turned out that Mr Mackrell didn't have a driving licence so I said to him, "Well, in that case you can't drive for me, because that would be illegal." And we just sort of said, "Well, you can do your constituency work, but you have to live in Lisburn" and so he had to move to Lisburn.

C. In regard to your other areas, I have to say to you, I categorically did not do – would not do what has been suggested in terms of taking cash. And, as you say, it would not seem at first glance to be the best way to do such a thing.

**Douglas Bain:** I think there was an issue with Mr Mackrell about some design work he commissioned, in a way that wasn't appropriate, and it was agreed that he would pay for that because you had no responsibility for it?

**Basil McCrea:** Correct. There is – I don't have it with me, because it wasn't specifically asked for – but I can supply you with details saying that –



**A Douglas Bain:** Yeah, well, I have details, but, I mean that's the position which he accepts.

**Basil McCrea:** He took it on. I explained to him that I can't put in invoices for work that I didn't commission or that wasn't utilised. And just to be clear for the record, although Mr Mackerel did design some leaflets, those leaflets were never printed or used or in any way as part of my locus.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. That's everything I want to ask you about these particular matters. Is there anything you wish to add?

**B. Basil McCrea:** I've one little point that I would like to make.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes.

**Basil McCrea:** It's not connected with this per se, if it's OK to move on.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes, by all means.

**Basil McCrea:** I am having considerable difficulty with the 'News Letter'. As you know, Commissioner, because we have talked about it, I am not permitted, under the legislation, to confirm, deny or talk or whatever. But this paper keeps referring to issues that I am not in a position to respond to. And I just wondered if there was anything that you might be able to do to – to explain to the papers that I am not in a position to respond?

**C. Douglas Bain:** Well, certainly that's something that I'll give further consideration to. I've already looked into it, without much success.

**Basil McCrea:** Can I just make a point to you that I did, very firmly, held the line about saying nothing. And – whenever I refer to legal processes I can't say it's your legal process, so it's problematic for me.

**Douglas Bain:** Yes, I appreciate that.

**Basil McCrea:** OK.

**A. Douglas Bain:** Now – the time is now 11.48, and we're terminating this interview.

**Basil McCrea:** Thank you.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Date:** 09 June 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner

██████████, Notetaker

Basil McCrea MLA

**Time Started:** 11.04 am

**Time Ended:** 12.49 pm

- A. Mr Bain:** This is the second interview of Basil McCrea MLA, in connection with complaints against him by Ashleigh Murray and others, taking place in room 283, Parliament Buildings, on 9 June 2015. The time is now 11.04 am. Good morning, Mr McCrea.

**Mr McCrea:** Good morning, Commissioner.

**Mr Bain:** Just for the record, those present are myself – Douglas Bain, the Commissioner for Standards – Mr McCrea and [REDACTED], who is taking a note of the meeting. As I think I said to you, Mr McCrea, my intention is to take your evidence on oath. Are you content with that?

**Mr McCrea:** I am, indeed.

**Mr Bain:** Do you prefer to take the oath on the Bible or to make an affirmation?

- B. Mr McCrea:** I will take it on the Bible.

**Mr Bain:** Would you read the words of the oath?

**Mr McCrea:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**Mr Bain:** Thank you very much. I have a couple of other formalities to go through. Can you confirm that you received a notice from me requiring your attendance here today?

**Mr McCrea:** I can confirm that.

**Mr Bain:** And that, in that, I outlined the areas that I intended to cover at the interview.

- C. Mr McCrea:** Yes, I can confirm that.

**Mr Bain:** I think we first met on 8 December in connection with this matter. Following that interview, did you receive a transcript?

**Mr McCrea:** I did, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Did you have an opportunity to revise it?

**Mr McCrea:** I did.

**Mr Bain:** Were you content that the transcript, as it now is, is a fair record of what you said?

**Mr McCrea:** I do.

**Mr Bain:** Is what you told me on that occasion true to the best of your knowledge and belief?

**A. Mr McCrea:** It is.

**Mr Bain:** Can we move on to some new matters? Just so as I have it clear in my mind, can I go through some of the dates so that you can tell me whether my understanding is correct? Am I right in thinking that you were an Ulster Unionist Party MLA from March 2007 until 4 March 2013?

**Mr McCrea:** That sounds about right, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Then you were an independent MLA from 4 March 2013 until 5 June 2013.

**Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**Mr Bain:** And, since then, you have been an NI21 MLA.

**Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**B. Mr Bain:** And leader of that party.

**Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**Mr Bain:** That party was officially launched in the MAC in Belfast on 6 June 2013.

**Mr McCrea:** That was the launch, but the formal constitution of the party was not until 16 November in the Europa.

**Mr Bain:** I am grateful. During the period from before you leaving the Ulster Unionist Party in March 2013, through to the launch of the party, sorry, the official formation of the party in November 2013 in the Europa, was that a busy time for you?

**Mr McCrea:** It was extremely busy. Not only was there the leaving of the party, and, obviously, I left behind quite a number of friends, there was the decision were we going to form a new party? If so, was it going to be different? What would we agree upon? There was a lot of pressure from the media, a lot of pressure in terms of finance to try and organise various things, so very busy. In addition to which I had to do my own constituency work.

**C. Mr Bain:** Did that degree of busyness have any impact on you and the way you behaved?

**Mr McCrea:** It certainly changed. I have always been an active MLA, but it did put it into a different sphere really that there were people coming along that wanted to be helpful, volunteers. There was a lot of activity from the media. So, there was certainly, shall we say, the hours were extremely long because it was not just doing the work in the Assembly. You would then have to go to public meetings, and I was doing that I would say that I was working six and a half days a week and working 20 hours, well, 18 hours a day. I was working a lot of hours.

**Mr Bain:** Did you consider yourself under stress at any time during that period?

**Mr McCrea:** Not under stress. I was motivated but certainly there were pressures.

A. **Mr Bain:** Can I move to some of the allegations against you? The first one I wish to deal with is an allegation made by Mr McCallister concerning a visit to Canada. Reading short, Mr McCallister's allegation is that you made an official visit to Canada in 2013, that the trip was part funded by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that you were conducting the visit as an MLA and that, during your time in Canada, you met a number of business leaders. I just want to go through these one by one. Can I ask you to look first of all at a letter that you sent to me earlier in my investigation when I made inquiries about that? I am showing you a document labelled DB9.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, indeed, DB9.

**Mr Bain:** Is that a letter you wrote to me on 21 October?

B. **Mr McCrea:** Yes, it is. I am sorry, it is dated 9 October. It is dated 21 October. I beg your pardon.

**Mr Bain:** I think in that letter you tell me that you did not visit Canada in 2013, as alleged by Mr McCallister, but, rather, you made a visit to Canada in 2012.

**Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**Mr Bain:** You also say that the visit in 2012 was not an official trip; it was part of your holiday.

**Mr McCrea:** Correct.

**Mr Bain:** Is that correct?

C. **Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**Mr Bain:** Did [REDACTED] have anything to do with that visit?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not. I paid for everything myself.

**Mr Bain:** Did you meet any business leaders, to your knowledge, during that visit?

**Mr McCrea:** I met one person who was a personal contact, but I was not there on business. I was there from Thursday, leaving early Monday. So, I was there over the weekend.

**Mr Bain:** Was any part of your cost of making that trip paid for out of your office cost expenses?

**A. Mr McCrea:** No.

In relation to that, could I ask you to look at two documents marked DP7 and DP8, which are printouts of your office cost expenditures for 2012-13 and 2013-14? Can you confirm that there is no payment showing there in respect of this trip to Canada?

**Mr McCrea:** I can confirm there is no payment there.

**Mr Bain:** Did you make that trip in any way in your capacity as an elected member of the Assembly?

**Mr McCrea:** No, that was an entirely personal vacation.

**Mr Bain:** I want to move on then to another allegation.

**B. Mr McCrea:** Just before you move on, Commissioner, can I just draw your attention I want to share this file with you. These are just that I may refer to, but this is for you. This is an attachment from an email by Jacquelyn Neglia outside tourism for my trip. She mentions about the CN Tower, the Blue Jays and Niagara Falls, and I visited all of those places at her suggestion during my holiday and have photographs to prove that this was entirely a vacation.

**Mr Bain:** Ok. We will come to that perhaps later.

**Mr McCrea:** Just in relation to it being a vacation, that is what that is about. I am going to leave that there because if I have any documents, they are in the same order for you there as they are for me.

**Mr Bain:** OK. Thank you. The next allegation I wish to consider is that you took and retained voyeuristic photographs of Jacquelyn Neglia. Can I just explore the background a little? Am I correct in thinking that Ms Neglia worked for you from 24 June 2013 until 5 June 2014?

**C. Mr McCrea:** That sounds correct, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Had you, in fact, come across her in August 2012 when she was on a young ambassador's programme and was attached to you for a week?

**Mr McCrea:** I certainly met her during that period of time, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Was she attached you for a week?

**Mr McCrea:** She was not attached to me personally, but she did spend some time with me, as did a number of other people, but, certainly, I would have been involved with that programme, yes, and I would have met her then.

**Mr Bain:** So, this was roughly two months before your trip to Canada.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** In the course of your trip to Canada, and you have shown me some of the sights you have seen, did you meet with her and, indeed, with her parents and her grandmother?



**A. Mr McCrea:** I did, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Did you spend some time with her? Did she show you some of the sights?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. She kindly offered to show me some of the sights, not the whole time but for two out of the four days.

**Mr Bain:** And while you were viewing the sites did you take photographs?

**Mr McCrea:** I took lots of photographs non-stop just taking photographs of anything and everything. It is one of the benefits of modern technology that you can just click away.

**Mr Bain:** Was Ms Neglia in shot in some of these photographs?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, she was.

**Mr Bain:** Did she know that you were taking the photographs?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, she did.

**B. Mr Bain:** Was there a photograph taken of her wearing white shirt and shorts taken in a hotel room?

**Mr McCrea:** There was certainly a photograph taken in my hotel room because the view was spectacular. Yes, and I checked with her beforehand, and there was a photograph taken, yes.

**Mr Bain:** And was there another photograph taken of her wearing a red dress that seems to have been taken at a filling station?

**Mr McCrea:** I can't recall, but there were multiple photographs taken.

**Mr Bain:** Let me see if I can find the correct document. I can't. You see the allegation is not that you took photographs but you took voyeuristic photographs. In any of the photographs you took of Ms Neglia, was she undressed?

**C. Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not.

**Mr Bain:** Or was she doing a private act?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not. It is worth saying, Commissioner, that all photographs that I take are automatically uploaded to the cloud and automatically downloaded to my computer in the Assembly. This is a process that we go through, and there are no photographs of any sort that you put to me.

**Mr Bain:** You see, the second part of this allegation is that you stored these photographs without Ms Neglia's knowledge. Is it possible that, when they were taken, she was not aware that they were going to be retained in your office?

**Mr McCrea:** They were just photographs. It was not like a photo shoot. This was just taking photographs, and there were lots and lots and lots of photographs; an awful lot of photographs.



- A. Also, if you were looking on my computer, there would be photographs of me in France when I was on holiday there, but there are also photographs of me when I am doing constituency work. Every single photograph goes up to the cloud and is stored then on the computer and is retained there. Anybody that had access to my Mac in the Assembly, they would have needed a password, but anybody that had access would have had access to any and every photograph.

**Mr Bain:** You see, Ms Neglia has told me that she felt uncomfortable when she found the photographs of her on your computer.

**Mr McCrea:** Well, they were standard photographs, and Ms Neglia had been working on that computer - that was actually her computer - for the entire period that she had been working with me. She would have seen all of the photographs coming in and all of them being there. There was no attempt to hide, no attempt in any way. In fact, to be honest with you, I would very rarely have been on that computer myself. It is only occasionally. So, I do not understand the point that she is making.

- B. **Mr Bain:** Well, she wouldn't actually, would she, have seen them coming in, because, at that time, she wasn't even working for you.

**Mr McCrea:** She won't have seen them come in, but there is an index of all the photographs, and, quite frequently, you would scan back and see, you know, can I get a photograph from such and such an area or whatever? She will certainly have mentioned to me in the past about other photographs not relating to her that she will have seen.

**Mr Bain:** Then I want to move on to another allegation concerning Ms Neglia, and that is -

**Mr McCrea:** Before you move on to that allegation, Commissioner, could I draw your attention to this document?

- C. **Mr Bain:** This is number three in the folder.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. These are text messages between me and Ms Murray and Ms Neglia on 18 November 2013. If you will see, there is a point there from Ashleigh Murray to Jacquelyn, "You need to get the dirt on him before you leave to protect yourself. I don't know how people work or think in Canada, but, trust me, you will need to protect him from yourself and the lies that he will tell". You will also note back that, at the bottom of that, "I'm in big trouble. Basil knows I talked to a lawyer because you told Suzanne". I am sorry that I am going in the opposite direction, Commissioner, but, in the third item down in white, Jacquelyn said, "That's what I'm doing. It's cool. I figure if he's going to play the game, so am I". Now, that was on 18 November. That was two days after the first party conference in the Europa.

It was around about this time, we were about to go on to the issue about Cork, I think, but it was around about that time that I was first made aware of that allegation. If you turn over the page, this is a series of text messages between Ashleigh Murray and Jacquelyn Neglia on 1 November.

- A.** This was the last day of Ashleigh Murray's employment, and it was also the day upon which Jacquelyn Neglia had had a formal review with me about what was unacceptable work practices. You will see that when you go through that there is a text message trail there, "This is your time to get out. When he starts that, you will gone". Then there is a note there to "protect myself" and whatever. So, I will just say to you that this is obviously an extract, Commissioner. I have the entire folder here with the entire story, but that is just to show you that that information is at hand.

**Mr Bain:** Thank you. That is helpful.

**Mr McCrea:** You just keep it because I might just quote the next one.

**Mr Bain:** Then, as you surmised, I wanted to move on to an allegation of inappropriate sexual behaviour towards Ms Neglia. That relates to an incident alleged to have occurred at the Sinn Féin summer school. I think this was alleged to have occurred on Saturday 29 June 2013.

- B.** **Mr McCrea:** You might just need to check out dates. It is in or about there. I am not sure. I think the speech that I gave was 29<sup>th</sup> and I think the night before was 28<sup>th</sup> but I might have got that slightly wrong. It is just for a matter of date correctness. It must have been the Friday that we travelled down stayed overnight, and I spoke on the Saturday.

**Mr Bain:** I think Ms Neglia had started work for you at the start of that week on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Mr McCrea:** She had come over a bit early. She was there. She had been intending to go and visit relatives in Dublin, I think it was, and then that hadn't work, so she came up a bit earlier than that. So, she was coming over as an intern really.

**Mr Bain:** But she started work formally on 24 June.

**Mr McCrea:** She will have a contract and that will be in the contract.

- C.** **Mr Bain:** How long before Sinn Féin's summer school had you been invited to speak at it?

**Mr McCrea:** Oh, I mean, some months. I can't recall exactly, but it wasn't immediate. There was some planning in it, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Were you still an Ulster Unionist MLA when you were –

**Mr McCrea:** No.

**Mr Bain:** So, it was in the period that you were an independent.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** And why were you invited, on your understanding?

- A. **Mr McCrea:** Well, I had taken a stance on the flying of the Union flag on the Belfast City Hall, where I had said that I thought that designated days was a reasonable position, and that had become quite an issue and it was brought to their attention. What Sinn Féin try to do is to bring different points of view down, so I went down to make a speech on that basis. The speech is recorded and is on YouTube.

**Mr Bain:** So, you were an independent MLA at the time.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** NI21 hadn't been formed.

**Mr McCrea:** No, it had been. There were discussions around the fact that we would be doing things, but we had not formed the party formally until 16 November when we had our first constitution and we were incorporated.

**Mr Bain:** So, do you accept that you were asked to attend because you were an MLA?

- B. **Mr McCrea:** I was asked to attend not because I was an MLA, but because I was perceived to be a unionist that had taken a particular stance. I think that would be more. MLAs, if you forgive me, are two a penny. It wasn't that you were down there for being an MLA; it was the stance that I had taken.

**Mr Bain:** Yes, but if you hadn't been an MLA, it is unlikely you would have been invited.

**Mr McCrea:** I can't answer that. I can only tell you that they invited me, and I went and I set out my stall.

**Mr Bain:** Who paid for the expenses of the trip?

**Mr McCrea:** The accommodation was provided by our hosts and was shared, but the transportation costs and any eating and such like on the way down, I paid for myself.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Again, was any part of the cost of the trip paid for out of your office cost expenses?

**Mr McCrea:** No, absolutely not.

**Mr Bain:** Am I right in thinking that the people that went on the trip, in addition to yourself and Ms Neglia, were [REDACTED] Connor Clements and [REDACTED]?

**Mr McCrea:** That's correct, yes.

**Mr Bain:** And I think that you have told me that you travelled down on Friday 28 June.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** And were you invited out that night by your hosts for a drink? Did you go for a drink?

- A. **Mr McCrea:** So, the actual venue was in the Mills Inn in Ballyvourney in County Cork, which is about an hour west of Cork. When we arrived there, we arrived late because it had taken some eight hours to get down, having picked people up on the way and what have you, and when I arrived, the rest of the party went off to another bed and breakfast or hotel about two minutes down the road to check in. I stayed and did the formalities of meeting people. Then the other group returned. It was late. It was about, from memory, about 11.00 pm, and we had some food and some hospitality and we stayed until about 2.00 at night.

**Mr Bain:** You went out for this food.

**Mr McCrea:** I stayed at the Mills Inn where the gathering was. It is the nature of a summer school that people get together, so I stayed there. The rest of the group went and checked into the hotel and then came back. Then we all ate food together, and we stayed in that establishment – Mills Inn – until about 2.00 am. At that stage, we decided to leave, and our hosts organised a taxi to take us and so there were six of us, including the driver in the car. It was a bit cramped, but it was only – we all just got in fairly tight – but it was only two minutes away. Then I went in, I went to the hotel, I went to bed. I had a speech to give in the morning.

- B. **Mr Bain:** I think this incident was alleged to have taken place on the return to the hotel, so that was, in fact, on Saturday 29 June.

**Mr McCrea:** I see where you are coming from now, Commissioner, in terms of the date, and, for the record, I deny any allegations of wrongdoing of any sort.

**Mr Bain:** The allegation is that you felt Ms Neglia's butt when trying to get into the hotel while someone had to get a key out to get in.

**Mr McCrea:** I deny any allegations of wrongdoing.

**Mr Bain:** Is it possible that you brushed against her by mistake?

**Mr McCrea:** I have no recollection of any such incident, and I categorically deny any wrongdoing or any allegations of wrongdoing.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Did [REDACTED] speak to you about an alleged incident with Jacquelyn the next day or shortly thereafter?

**Mr McCrea:** No, not for some time. From memory, the allegation was mentioned to me in and around 16 to 18 November, which was some time later. That is why I refer you to the earlier correspondence about getting the dirt and such like. At that time, it was mentioned, but it was mentioned in passing. Remember, I was up to my eyes in terms of party conference, our biggest conference, which was the launch. I categorically denied it then, and I also say to you, Commissioner, if I could turn you over the page that –

**Mr Bain:** This is now to document 4 in the folder.



- A. **Mr McCrea:** So, this is a letter written by Jacquelyn Neglia to [REDACTED] requesting her position to be as youth director, and you will notice, well, you can read for yourself, but you will notice that it was at August that her contract came to an end. It was only a short-term internship, and she made really strenuous representations in August to get me to extend her contract. You can see in the second, sorry, the third yellow block, Commissioner, that I did tell her at the time that this is really difficult because there isn't funding, but we will see what we can do, but she was very keen to come on at that point.

You will also notice that she was saying that her experience was a turning point in her life. I will just say to you that there were certainly no issues at that time, and I think [REDACTED] just checked with her about the alleged incident, and she said no. There was nothing that she wanted to take forward on it.

**Mr Bain:** How did [REDACTED] know about the alleged incident?

- B. **Mr McCrea:** Because you put it to me did [REDACTED] ask about the incident, and [REDACTED] had put it to me just after the conference, and, given that Jacquelyn Neglia was now, I mean, obviously, I had denied it, but, given that she was now applying for this job as youth director of NI21, she just made sure that there were no issues at all, and she said no.

**Mr Bain:** So, if I am understanding this correctly, your position is not only did nothing happen untoward in Cork but that Jacquelyn Neglia is, at best, mistaken when she says that she raised this issue with [REDACTED] very shortly afterwards and that [REDACTED] spoke to you very shortly afterwards.

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely, categorically. What I recollect was it was around about 18 November, some months after the event, and after Ms Neglia had been very keen to come along and get her contract extended. Another reason that I am pointing to that is that she was keen to carry on working, and it did require some persuasion on my point of view because it was an unbudgeted expense, and that's what had to happen.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Now, can we move on to a number of allegations made by Ashleigh Murray and by Alan Paterson? It is alleged by Mr Patterson that Ms Murray told him that you had acted to pervert and frustrate a potential complaint about your conduct towards her by instructing and pressurising her to make false statements about your relationship with Ashleigh Murray. First of all, did you, at any time, try to pervert or frustrate a potential complaint?

**Mr McCrea:** No, I categorically deny that. Can I point out, Commissioner, that Ms Murray was having weekly interviews with People First. She had performance reviews with [REDACTED] and Suzanne Chalkley. She was receiving the support of the Prince's Trust. She was aware of the complaints process. She had been working with Karen Tabahe and knew all of those, and she was intimately aware of complaints processes because she had had issues in previous employment, which I will go into if required. So, what I can tell you is there was no attempt to stop any complaint coming forward.

- A. In fact, people were encouraged to come and talk to me directly, and there were all sorts of processes in place should people wish to avail of them, and at no time did Ms Murray seek to make a complaint, and at no time did Mr Patterson talk to me about it.

**Mr Bain:** Just to go into a little more detail, in her statement in support of her complaint, Ms Murray sets out an alleged conversation with you about a complaint she alleges you said had been made to Alan Patterson about your conduct. Sorry, that is a bit confused, so let's try again.

**Mr McCrea:** It is confused because the complaint is confused.

**Mr Bain:** I am putting it simply: the allegation is that you said that Mr Patterson wasn't going to investigate a complaint that you had made about Ashleigh Murray and that that was –

**Mr McCrea:** That wasn't my – first of all, it is really confusing, but that wasn't what I read into what she said. I thought that what she was saying was that I thought that she had made a complaint about me to Alan Patterson.

- B. **Mr Bain:** Right.

**Mr McCrea:** But, in any case –

**Mr Bain:** Had you made any complaint?

**Mr McCrea:** The answer is no. If I quote from her statement, because it is really confusing, "I told Mr McCrea I had not placed a complaint about him". So, that is what she said that she hadn't made a complaint. Then she tries to answer, "I told him what I was going to say is that we had our issues, but they were now resolved as we had spoken about them". Clearly, there is no issue here. Then she says, "Since this incident, I have come to discover that Alan Patterson did not call a meeting". This is totally confusing, and I really don't know what she's talking about.

- C. **Mr Bain:** I think she also says, doesn't she, after the [Inaudible] she relates that, essentially, that you had your issues but they had been resolved. She claims that you told her not to say that but to say nothing. Is that true?

**Mr McCrea:** I have no idea what she's talking about.

**Mr Bain:** In any event, she also alleges at paragraph 19 of her statement in support of her complaint you were in a Chinese restaurant in Belfast one evening when she alleges you told her that if you ever told anyone about this, you would destroy her, though she doesn't say what "this" was. Was there ever any such conversation?

**Mr McCrea:** No, and it sounds, I can't remember. I do remember, occasionally, it was practice to take lots of people out to have a discussion. It was a way, if we had been out at an event, sometimes, we would just grab a Chinese or whatever before we were going home. I don't remember any conversation that could be construed in such a way. Certainly, I am sort of at a loss as to know what she is talking about.

- A. **Mr Bain:** At any time, did you try to prevent Ashleigh Murray taking part in the Carecall inquiry?

**Mr McCrea:** No. In fact, if you recall that when the allegations were made, Mr McCallister did not reveal who the person was that was making the complaint. I had no knowledge and was not aware of that, but I wouldn't have stopped anybody making any complaints. I would have preferred if they had gone through proper channels, but I certainly was unaware and did not get involved in that process.

**Mr Bain:** The next allegation that I want to consider is one also made by Ms Murray that, since the allegations of your conduct towards her became public, you used a media attempt to blacken her name. What do you say to that allegation?

**Mr McCrea:** I deny that allegation.

- B. **Mr Bain:** She says that specific allegations were put to you by [REDACTED] of the 'News Letter' and that you caused a solicitor's letter to be sent to [REDACTED] of the 'News Letter' stating that Ms Murray was mentally unwell and unreliable. Is there any substance to that allegation?

**Mr McCrea:** When I met with [REDACTED] on 22 May, which was election day, I was there to talk to him about something else. He propositioned me with a letter from Ashleigh Murray. I took legal advice, as was appropriate, and my solicitor handled such matters in what he considered to be the most appropriate way. That is the factual statement.

**Mr Bain:** Did your solicitor's letter assert that Ms Murray was mentally unwell and unreliable?

**Mr McCrea:** I did not see copy of the letter because, obviously, I was in a fair amount of shock, but I can certainly say that he will definitely have said that she was an unreliable witness and that there were issues surrounding that, but the matter is a matter of record, and I am happy to furnish you with whatever that letter says.

- C. **Mr Bain:** That would be helpful. Presumably, your solicitor would say that Ms Murray was unreliable based on information given by you.

**Mr McCrea:** I was in shock at the time when this happened. I had just come off the BBC 'The View', a letter had been given to me by a 'News Letter' correspondent. For the next few days, it was all over the front page of the papers, so when I spoke to my solicitor, I explained to him what was going on, and I, of course, denied absolutely the allegations that were put in place, and, as is the right way and is the reason why you have legal representation is I relied upon my solicitor to deal with these matters. I have tried throughout all of these processes, as you will know, Commissioner, to refrain from engaging in a discussion in the media. I did make one comment, one statement, which I am happy to provide you with. Here is a copy. In fact, if I turn it over, I will say to you, it would be appendix 8A. So, that is the statement that I gave to the 'Sunday Life', and it is worth stating that they contacted me.

**Mr Bain:** We will come to that in a little bit if we can.

**A. Mr McCrea:** Sorry, OK. So, my solicitor responded to my situation and replied as a matter of form to, I think it was [REDACTED] and I'm not sure that he got a response, but I am happy to provide such information.

**Mr Bain:** Thank you. Ms Murray further alleges that either you or your solicitor leaked that letter to [REDACTED] to the media? Did you leak it to the media?

**Mr McCrea:** I categorically did not leak anything at any time, and neither would my solicitor have done so.

**Mr Bain:** As far you know, has that letter reached the media?

**Mr McCrea:** It has not reached the media. I can also say, OK, you are about to turn round and say something.

**Mr Bain:** I think you will recall that Ms Murray gave an interview to the BBC confirming that allegations were made about your conduct towards her.

**B. Mr McCrea:** I know that she was on the BBC, yes.

**Mr Bain:** And, shortly after that, I think you gave an interview on 'The View'.

**Mr McCrea:** No. My understanding is that 'The View' was on the night of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. I can't remember when she – when did she give her interview?

**Mr Bain:** My understanding was before you appeared on 'The View'.

**Mr McCrea:** The chronology that I had was that I was confronted by a letter on and around about 6.00 o'clock on 22 May by [REDACTED]. I denied the allegations. I went out to the car, which was parked outside, to phone my solicitor. Whilst I was phoning my solicitor, the BBC called and said, "We are doing an interview this evening with John McCallister and others, and this is what is alleged and we are aware of the letter from the 'News Letter' and giving you the opportunity to come along and rebut whatever has been said. That then took, he had made a very protracted negotiation between my solicitor and the BBC solicitors because, of course, I have only just been presented with this information.

**C.** The issue about going on to the BBC 'The View', there was no bearing on Ashleigh Murray or anything that she had said. I can check when the date was, but I did not see her interview on the BBC. I knew that it had happened, but I did not know what was said.

**Mr Bain:** You see what Ms Murray alleges is that, during your interview on 'The View', you said that you knew nothing of the allegations, and if you had said that, that would have been untrue because you did know of them, and you had just received them from [REDACTED] earlier that evening.

**Mr McCrea:** What I had been told was, here was a letter - and we are talking about one hour - which I hadn't really had a chance to read in any detail. The allegations that were put forward were, in my view, well, not in my view, I categorically deny the allegations in those papers.



- A. There had been a process going round from a week before where allegations had been made in the offices of the 'News Letter', but neither Mr McCallister nor Ms Murray nor anybody had come forward and made a complaint or made anything of that order. So, my response was one of saying, "I don't know what is being put", but I categorically denied any wrongdoing. I can check, since you have raised it, I can check the transcript of what I actually said.

**Mr Bain:** You see, I have had the benefit of checking the transcript, and it is actually untrue to say, as Ms Murray does, that, during that interview, you said you knew nothing of the allegations.

**Mr McCrea:** I didn't say that.

**Mr Bain:** You didn't say that. On a fair reading of what you said at the interview is that you were aware of rumours. You had been aware of rumours for some weeks, but no specific allegations or complaint had been made, and, if it is, you would respond to it.

- B. **Mr McCrea:** Well, thank you, Commissioner. You have the advantage of me. That confirms I think what I recollected to you here without notes.

**Mr Bain:** But I am just a little uncertain here because I thought you just told me a few moments ago that [REDACTED] had shown you this letter, which did make specific allegations.

**Mr McCrea:** He had made allegations, but I had no idea about the provenance of these or what was going on, so I could have said, "Here's what's going on". I did actually send out an email after 'The View'. Remember this is not live, but after 'The View', admitting to the fact that sexual allegations had been made and that those were carried by the press the following day. So, I, at no time tried to hide or avoid the fact that there were allegations.

**Mr Bain:** Would you accept that, when you said that no specific allegations or complaint or no specific allegations had been made against you that was perhaps not entirely accurate? The position was, rather, that they had been made but only very shortly before 'The View', and you hadn't had an opportunity to consider them.

- C. **Mr McCrea:** I would be happy to say that. You do understand, Commissioner, that I was in a complete state of shock. I had no idea what to do. You are going on television live, it is election day, the pressure was intense. I remember just feeling how - to be at the centre of it, it is incredible to try and explain what happened, and I did my best to answer as honestly as I could, as I am doing with you, the questions that were put to me in a way that was fair, and at no time have I gone off to try and dis anybody. I suspect people thought that I might come out fighting and this, that and the other. Actually, I took the position throughout all of this that we will go through due process because I have done nothing wrong. I absolutely reject the one specific allegation that was put in that letter. What more can I say?

**Mr Bain:** Ms Murray further alleges that you gave information about her private life to the 'Sunday Life'.

- A.** I think you have referred me to the document at appendix 8A of your statement, which is the statement you gave to the 'Sunday Life'. Was that a written statement?
- Mr McCrea:** That was a written statement. The 'Sunday Life' contacted me, and, remember, I was getting a barrage. The whole press was all over me, and I had refused to take calls, but, sometimes, what happens is one gets through and then you are on the phone, but the 'Sunday Life' put it to me that they were aware, having gone through the internet, of an official record of a meeting of the DEL Committee [REDACTED] and it set out a whole lot of information, and they put that to me and I said, "Well, it is the official record", but I think that was the source of their information.
- Mr Bain:** Just to be clear, the meeting of the DEL Committee you are referring to is one at which Ms Murray voluntarily gave evidence and exposed a great deal of personal information about herself.
- B.** **Mr McCrea:** Absolutely.
- Mr Bain:** You were chairing that Committee at that time.
- Mr Bain:** Yes, but I think, in fact, it appears to me that Ms Murray had put much of that information in the public domain well before that, if I can find it. Can I show you a document – DP5 – which is printed out from the web?
- Mr McCrea:** Yes.
- Mr Bain:** Is that a document appearing to be from the Prince's Trust about Ms Murray?
- Mr McCrea:** That is correct. It is from the Prince's Trust.
- Mr Bain:** And it describes her as age 20.
- C.** **Mr McCrea:** That's correct.
- Mr Bain:** But, unfortunately, it doesn't show the date on which it was posted, but if I show you another document – DP10 – which is something from the web for NI Jobfinder, and you see that is dated 8 May 2012.
- Mr McCrea:** That's correct.
- Mr Bain:** That also describes Ms Murray as age 20.
- Mr McCrea:** Yes.
- Mr Bain:** Which must mean that DP5 was some time in 2012.
- Mr McCrea:** That's correct, yes.
- Mr Bain:** So, most probably before she gave evidence to the DEL Committee.
- Mr McCrea:** Absolutely, yes.

A. **Mr Bain:** Were you the source of any private information about Ms Murray to the 'Sunday Life'?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not.

**Mr Bain:** Did you attempt in any way to use the media to discredit Ms Murray?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not.

**Mr Bain:** Then can we move on?

**Mr McCrea:** Before we move on, can I draw your attention, if you turn over the page to appendix 8B? This is a list of text messages between Jacquelyn Neglia and Ashleigh Murray on 22 May. As you read through, you will see that the 'Sunday Life' is mentioned in item 2208, but you will also see that Ms Murray is, I quote, "Give me his Twitter password, and I'll hack the fuck out of him". Jacquelyn Neglia has accessed my Twitter accounts, so comment 2190. That is all that would be of interest to you, I think. You will see that, in item 2219, Ashleigh Murray says, "I now have legal access to that account. When I started NI21, I was in charge of social media.

B. He set me up on it. He just forgot to take me off'. If I turn you over the page, "showed them to the solicitors and the 'Sunday Life'". "Oh, that's good then. Nothing else was referring to you. You've got access to Facebook". So, what I can say to you is that, in relation to who was trying to blacken whose name through the media, that Jacquelyn Neglia and Ashleigh Murray attempted to hack, and did hack, my Twitter account but did not find anything to their satisfaction, I suppose, and they did attempt to do the Facebook one, but, obviously, I had changed the password by that stage, but this is part of a complete series of texts, which I have, thus far, not burdened you with. I am not going to put these in, but I have all of these issues, all text messages, for your perusal, but, in relation to that specific issue, it was not me that was trying to discredit anybody, it was, rather, the aforementioned Jacquelyn Neglia, acting at Ashleigh Murray's instigation, that was trying to blacken me.

C. **Mr Bain:** Can we move on? As you know, Ms Murray also makes allegations of inappropriate sexual conduct towards you. The first one of these is that, on or about 9 April 2013, whilst you were driving your car near to [REDACTED] in [REDACTED], you repeatedly rubbed her leg. What do you say to that?

**Mr McCrea:** I deny any allegation of wrongdoing.

**Mr Bain:** She alleges that, on or about that date, she accompanied you to a dinner meeting with [REDACTED] at the MAC. Did you have a dinner meeting at the MAC with [REDACTED] at about that time?

**Mr McCrea:** I seem to recall there were actually two meetings, of which [REDACTED] was the earlier one for lunch, and the second one was with a [REDACTED]. That was after that. So, there were two meetings. She was there, but she wasn't part of the meeting. She was sat in a different place actually whilst we talked about matters.

- A. I didn't ask her to leave; she just absented herself. She had some other things she wanted to do.

**Mr Bain:** Were your meetings that day in connection with NI21 business or your business as an MLA?

**Mr McCrea:** It would have been about NI21 business. It was a chat, a discussion. It wasn't a formal meeting.

**Mr Bain:** It wasn't a formal meeting.

**Mr McCrea:** We were meeting up and "What are you doing, and what are your plans?", but it was certainly not constituency business or anything like that.

**Mr Bain:** What time did the second of these meetings finish roughly?

- B. **Mr McCrea:** I would have said – it wasn't late. It was maybe 6.00 pm, that sort of time. About 6.00 pm, I would have thought.

**Mr Bain:** And, I think, Ms Murray, at that time, was living in the [REDACTED]

**Mr McCrea:** That's correct.

**Mr Bain:** And you were living in Lisburn.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** And did you agree to give her a lift home?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. It would have been common practice for me that if I was going past in that direction that I would have just dropped her off, yes.

- C. **Mr Bain:** And were you stopped by the police on your way to her house?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, I was. I was stopped at [REDACTED] From what I can see, it was routine exercise, but I was stopped, and they breathalysed me as a matter of routine. I know that was in the submission. I can tell you that not only did I pass, because, obviously if I hadn't passed, it would have been a different story, but the reading was zero actually, and, anyway, it happened. We talked and went on. Obviously, the police would have known – I suspect they knew who I was – and, therefore, they got quite rigorous about going through all the proper procedures, but, after that was over, her house was about five minutes away, so I dropped her off and then went home.

**Mr Bain:** As part of that rigorous police procedure, they are required to tell you the reason for stopping your vehicle. What reason did the officer give?

**Mr McCrea:** I'm not sure. I think I might have crossed the lane in front of them. There is a two-lane carriageway there. I think I pulled out in front of him, and I think he just was letting me know that that was not appropriate, when, of course, if I had done anything wrong, I would have said so.

A. **Mr Bain:** And is it right that Ms Murray was in the front passenger seat of the car when you were stopped.

**Mr McCrea:** That's correct.

**Mr Bain:** Did she make any complaint to the police about your conduct?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not. We were stopped for a while. There was plenty of opportunity to talk if she wanted to say and if there had been any concerns, and there was absolutely no concern raised by her. The answer is no.

**Mr Bain:** Your car would have been stopped for some time while the police breathalysed you and went through the paperwork and so on.

**Mr McCrea:** About five or six minutes maybe, maybe 10 minutes. It wasn't a "Stop and go on, sir". It was, "We need to check your details and whatever".

B. **Mr Bain:** At that time, you were a relatively short distance from Ms Murray's home.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, just outside the [REDACTED] where she lived.

**Mr Bain:** If she had been concerned about your conduct, she could readily have left your car and walked home at that time.

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely.

**Mr Bain:** But she didn't.

**Mr McCrea:** No, and she continued to accept lifts and such like thereafter.

**Mr Bain:** Now, I have another statement from Ms Murray dated 15 May 2014, so it predates the statement in support of her complaint, and there is absolutely no mention of this incident in it. I know that it is difficult question for you, but can you offer any explanation of why, if it was such a significant event, there is no mention of it in her first statement that is nearest in time to it?

C. **Mr McCrea:** No, I have to say that you have the advantage of me there. I can only say to you that the event was not a big event in my mind. I did like to cross the line in front of the police, of course, and whatever, but it was not anything major or whatever. It was nothing of any significance. The only thing that I can tell you, and you know that I have made this position clear, that I believe that Ms Murray's allegations are not only unfounded, but they are malicious and are part of a new, wider conspiracy. That is the only observation I can offer to you. I do not know why she put it in one statement and didn't put it in another.

**Mr Bain:** The second allegation under this head made by Ms Murray is that, during April 2013, you held a meeting in La Mon Hotel for like-minded people to gather and discuss the new political party.

**Mr McCrea:** That's correct.

**Mr Bain:** That is correct that you did do that, and she says, "After the meeting, there was a lot of alcohol consumed. Mr McCrea made advances towards me.



- A. I put this down to ill-judgement and alcohol consumption. No sexual contact took place. That night I left and went home". Just so as we can get the time right, was that alleged incident in La Mon before or after the one that we have just talked about in [REDACTED]?

**Mr McCrea:** Do you know what? I can't tell you. I would need to check. I am sorry; I just don't recall. I think it must have been after. Anyway, I can check. Sorry, I shouldn't have gone [Inaudible].

**Mr Bain:** Is it correct that some of the people attending the meeting stayed the night and others went home?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, that's correct.

**Mr Bain:** The meeting was to continue the next day.

- B. **Mr McCrea:** Yes, it was a two-day meeting, and some people were living locally, so they would have gone home. Others had a bit of a distance to travel, so they stayed. Part of it was to be a bit of a bonding exercise where we got to know one another. It wasn't as if – there wasn't a great establishment there at that stage, it was just a new interest in and probably some commonality. So, it was a chance to get together. But, yes, some people went home and some people stayed and those that went home returned the next day.

**Mr Bain:** Just to be clear, you stayed the night at the La Mon.

**Mr McCrea:** I did, yes.

**Mr Bain:** And Ms Murray was one of those who elected to go home.

- C. **Mr McCrea:** That is correct.

**Mr Bain:** Did she come back the next day?

**Mr McCrea:** She did.

**Mr Bain:** The day after that would have been the Monday. Did she attend work as normal?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, she did, yes.

**Mr Bain:** Was a lot of alcohol consumed by those who were staying at the hotel?

**Mr McCrea:** It was certainly a long night. Part of the benefit of being able to stay in a hotel is that you can take a drink, and it was part of the purpose, but it wasn't as if people were – it wasn't that type of grouping where people were drinking to excess. We had wine at the table at dinner, and, after the dinner was over, by which time, Ashleigh Murray would have left, we stayed up and we did have some more alcohol, but, I suppose, over dinner, it was really just wine.

**A. Mr Bain:** Did you make any advances of a sexual nature towards Ms Murray?

**Mr McCrea:** Ms Murray has made very specific allegations, and I absolutely deny them. What I can tell you in relation to that is that the meeting finished at around about 5.00 pm. The only bits of information that were needing to be looked after would have been my laptops. There were no files or folders or whatever. I went up to my room to deposit my laptop. Ms Murray offered or asked could she leave her bag up in my room because, obviously, she didn't have a room to put it in. I said yes. We went up to the room. I guess that was around about 5.30 pm. As dinner was 7.30 pm, from memory, there was a bit of time where we chatted about things and we were there in the room. I can say categorically that there was no wrongdoing. Absolutely nothing happened that could be in any way considered to be wrong. That is all I can tell you about that. If I probably - maybe you want to ask me another question - but there was a second incident. We went down together to dinner. We had dinner with everybody, talked as normal. Around about 10.30 pm, something of that ilk, Ms Murray got a phone call saying that her dog was ill.

**B.** She seemed a little upset about this and she wanted to go home. I offered to get her a taxi. She said there was no problem that somebody was going to come and pick her up. Obviously, her bag was still in my room, so I accompanied her up to my room, which was actually some distance away - it is quite a big hotel - collected her bag, took her back to reception. Her lift came and took her away. I don't know who the lift was, but it took her home and I went back and rejoined the group and we spent the rest of the night.

**Mr Bain:** In her statement that I mentioned earlier of 15 May 2014, she alleges that you asked Ms Murray to get something from your room. Did you ever do that?

**Mr McCrea:** Absolutely not. It is not as if there would've been anything up in the room to go and get. This was more of a think-tank-type operation, and I categorically did not send her up to my room.

**Mr Bain:** In fact, the position you say is that you went back to the room because she needed to collect her bag after dinner.

**C. Mr McCrea:** Correct. She had left, having been up in my room previously. She needed somewhere to put it for safety, and why not.

**Mr Bain:** Then she alleges that when she went up to your room, you followed her, whereas, I understand you to say is you went up together to collect the bag.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes.

**Mr Bain:** Because only you would have a key pass to get in the door.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. It didn't seem right to say, "Here is the key. Go get your own bag", given that she was distressed. So, yes, of course, I walked her up, got her bag, lifted her bag, took her back down. That's what happened.

**Mr Bain:** Then she alleges that you made advances on her and came towards her with your pants round your ankles.

- A. **Mr McCrea:** Commissioner, I am reluctant to talk about things that are of a private nature because, as I have said to you, whether you do or whether you don't say, these things get reported, but I will make it absolutely clear that I completely deny those allegations. I did not and would not do such a thing.

**Mr Bain:** She goes on that you managed to get hold of her tights, and she told you, "No", and you stopped.

**Mr McCrea:** First of all, I completely deny any wrongdoing, any allegation of that matter. Such a thing would be assault. I understand that Ms Murray has been interviewed by the police – sorry, "interviewed" is the wrong word – has been called upon by the police to see if she wants to make any allegations and she does not. All I can say to you is that specific allegation that she has put in detail I did not do and would not do. Apart from anything else, it is just ridiculous when you try and read it. Would such a thing be physically possible? It just is ridiculous.

- B. **Mr Bain:** For completeness, Ms Murray goes on that no sexual intercourse took place, and you agree with that.

**Mr McCrea:** She has made this statement on a number of occasions, to the extent of underlining the thing. All I can say to you, Commissioner, is that I have done nothing wrong, and what she has said is a fabrication.

**Mr Bain:** Although, on this occasion, Ms Murray said that no sexual intercourse took place, she has claimed to another person that sexual intercourse did take place either on this occasion or on some other occasion with you. Is there any truth in that?

**Mr McCrea:** Commissioner, I have talked to you in the past that I am very keen to be helpful, but I am aware that these transcripts get read by political opponents and whatever. All I will say to you on this matter is that it is in complete contradiction to numerous written statements, including the statement that she gave to you but also the statement that she gave to the 'News Letter', and, I think, also in the statement that she gave to Carecall, though I'm not so sure about that one, but this is an entire contradiction, and I affirm that I have done nothing wrong at any time.

- C. **Mr Bain:** You said Ms Murray, in your understanding, had declined the opportunity to make a statement to the police about this.

**Mr McCrea:** My understanding is that, from the media reports, there was certainly, I think it was in the 'Belfast Telegraph' that the police had been involved in some way to have a look, but, as far as I am aware, any such conversation that took place did not result in any complaint being made of any shape or form.

**Mr Bain:** Have the police spoken to you at all about this incident?

**Mr McCrea:** No.



- A. **Mr Bain:** A further allegation of a sexual nature that Ms Murray makes is, again, in this statement of May 2014 where she says that, while she was working at your Lisburn office, [REDACTED]. Did any such conversation take place?

**Mr McCrea:** Commissioner, we are once again in an area of talking about private matters. I am keen to be helpful and to go and discuss whatever to help you reach your conclusion, but such a thing would obviously be in complete contradiction to her statements that no sexual contact took place. I can only say to you that all of her statements have been a mishmash of allegations, half truths, spinning things or whatever, and I deny doing anything wrong at any time.

**Mr Bain:** I think the question was: Was there ever a conversation with Ms Murray [REDACTED]?

- B. **Mr McCrea:** I do not recall any such conversation, but I am reluctant to go into details – not details – but I am reluctant to talk about this extensively because I am aware that this report will be subject to public scrutiny.

**Mr Bain:** But I would have thought it was fairly simple to say, “No, there was no such conversation”, or, “Yes, there was such a conversation”.

**Mr McCrea:** I can only say, Commissioner that, if you want, I am here to try and answer allegations of wrongdoing, not to discuss my private life. I realise that they are inextricably linked in certain circumstances. All I can say to you for the record is that, at no time, have I done anything, that Ms Murray’s allegations are contradictory in large numbers of areas. It is malicious, and falsehoods that have been put forward in many issues, and I deny doing anything wrong at any time.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Yes, I appreciate that, but it is quite important what your position is on this. Ms Murray asserts that there was a conversation with you [REDACTED]. Now, is that true or false, or do you not recollect?

**Mr McCrea:** I am not prepared to talk about my private life. I do not recall having a conversation with her in the way that you have put to me. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], but I will say to you once again that I did not do anything wrong, but the allegations that Ms Murray has put forward are of a contradictory nature and designed to do damage to me. It is part of a conspiracy, and I am reluctant to talk about my private life on the record. That is all I can really say on the matter.

- A. **Mr Bain:** Well, we have to return to that because you are aware of the legal position that you are required to answer questions unless you have a reason that would justify you not answering a question in court, and, so far, you haven't advanced any such reason.

**Mr McCrea:** If, as you know, this particular statement really only came to light recently when you wrote to me about it, and I have tried my best to be helpful. I am here to answer allegations of wrongdoing. No such wrongdoing has taken place. I do not like the fact that we get into a situation where you are damned if you do and you are damned if you don't in this regard. No allegation of wrongdoing has been put to me. I have done no wrongdoing. That's it.

**Mr Bain:** The allegation of wrongdoing is very straightforward that following this conversation [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- B. **Mr McCrea:** I deny such an allegation.

**Mr Bain:** Just to tie down the date of this alleged incident, Ms Murray says it was while she was working in Lisburn. If that is correct, that would mean it was between August and November 2013.

**Mr McCrea:** That would be correct, yes. That's the date, but I can tell you I don't know what date she's referring to.

**Mr Bain:** Indeed, but you see the difficulty is, in a statement Ms Murray made to Carecall, it would appear that this alleged incident, according to her, took place on 4 May 2013 while she wasn't working at Lisburn.

**Mr McCrea:** She was definitely not working at Lisburn at that time.

**Mr Bain:** Indeed, on 4 May 2013, she wasn't even a paid employee of yours.

**Mr McCrea:** That would be correct.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Again, and you may not be able to help me on this very much, in the statement she makes in support of her complaint, there is no mention of this apparently significant incident. Can you offer any explanation for that, other than the obvious one?

**Mr McCrea:** I have said to you in answer to the earlier questions, these are difficult subjects to talk about. All I can say to you is it appears to be diametrically opposed to the determination that she went to say in lots of formal statements that no contact took place. The only thing I can think of is that she was looking at a number of different strategies and that maybe she forgot which strategy she was talking about, but I have made the case. As you know, or maybe you don't know actually, I will say it on the record, I am aware that Ashleigh Murray [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

A.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- B. The female member of staff, Karen Tabahe, was also in the office and would have been the notified person internally if she had any complaints, and there were no complaints. I want to show you, I don't want to take you out of it, but we have passed this by. This is –

**Mr Bain:** This is document 7A from your folder.

**Mr McCrea:** This was the date upon which Ashleigh Murray left - 1 November - and this is me writing this text saying, "I have heard from Suzanne", and this is her response.

**Mr Bain:** The significant part of it is perhaps the first sentence, "It really broke my heart to leave", which is hardly consistent with someone who is hugely unhappy in her work and being harassed".

- C. **Mr McCrea:** Not only that, but "If the financial situation changes, I will be back in a heartbeat. Thank you so much for everything. You took a chance on me when I needed it, and I will never forget it". That is only one of, as you know, Commissioner, I have a complete collection on that. If I can also mention, oh, sorry, you are going to come on to some other issues anyway, but I just wanted to put that down.

**Mr Bain:** Thank you. I already have that from another source. Just to be clear, you said that, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Is that something you know from your own knowledge, or is it something someone has told you, other than Ms Murray?

**Mr McCrea:** Other than Ms Murray. Ms Murray mentioned it early on, but I obviously didn't know the significance. She certainly didn't go into detail.

**Mr Bain:** What did she tell you?

- A. **Mr McCrea:** She just said that she had had some difficulties in the past with the nursing home that she had been in, and I didn't like to pry. I can't remember exactly what the terminology was, but when we were looking at this, she said there are some people keeping saying about me and that is what she said.

**Mr Bain:** Was that the [REDACTED] she was working in?

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. For the record, I did get contacted on Facebook by an individual who said that he had heard about certain things. His wife had worked in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as well. I subsequently got talking to a gentleman who was the recipient of a complaint. He is a very good man but reluctant to talk formally because he is still in employment, not with [REDACTED] but he is still in employment and that is what happens in these allegations is that you worry about saying it, but I know the name and address of the person, and I know that it happened twice, and I know I am not offering proof here, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

- B. **Mr Bain:** But, while you don't doubt what was said, you can't really say whether that's true or not because you don't know.

**Mr McCrea:** I have no access to records, but all I can tell you was that I was informed, I have information and that is that.

**Mr Bain:** We have now been going quite a considerable time. I only have probably another five minutes dealing with this aspect. We will continue and carry on and deal with that. Ms Murray also alleges, and this is in her statement in support of her complaint, "Mr McCrea, on many occasions, made advances, stroked my leg, commented about my bum". What do you say to that?

**Mr McCrea:** I deny any such allegations.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Again, in the same statement, she said, "Mr McCrea would make advances to me and feel my bum, legs, etc. He would make sexual comments about me. This started from about two weeks after I started working for him until approximately May/June time. What do you say to that?

**Mr McCrea:** I deny any allegations of wrongdoing. I will respectfully point out to the Commissioner that, for much of her time when she was employed, she was in the Lisburn office, and I was not there very often. I can also refer the Commissioner to a performance review, which is appendix 7C, if you just turn the page. This will probably be relevant actually to some of the other points that you bring up, but just to point out that Ms Murray had a performance review carried out by [REDACTED] and Mrs Chalkley, and at no time did she mention any of those issues, but you can see that we were having difficulty with her timekeeping issues.

- A. I can also just say that Ms Murray was actually being looked after People First on a weekly basis. The Prince's Trust were still in support. There was a whole range of people that she could have talked to if there had been a problem. I can also tell you, Commissioner, that I have copious emails, texts and whatever of communications with her and between her and Jacquelyn, and at no time was any of this ever mentioned.

**Mr Bain:** When she refers to May or June time, that must be May 2013.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes, it must be. Yes, because she left in – I always get the years wrong – she started work in the summer of 2013 and left and was working for five months and left. Yes, that is right. It is 2013.

**Mr Bain:** So, that is more than a year before she made the complaint against you for misconduct, which you say didn't take place at all. Even on the basis of her allegation, it is more than a year before she made a complaint about it.

- B. **Mr McCrea:** Absolutely.

**Mr Bain:** In her earlier statement, the one of May 2013, she says, "Mr McCrea would make advances on me and feel bum, legs, etc. He would make sexual comments about me. This started from about two weeks after I started work for him until I started work in the office in Lisburn in August". So, there is a difference on the timing on that.

**Mr McCrea:** There is.

**Mr Bain:** I don't suppose you can explain.

**Mr McCrea:** No, I can't explain. As I have said to you repeatedly, there are so many contradictions, factual inaccuracies. It is hard to keep up with which particular thread that she is going down.

- C. **Mr Bain:** Indeed. Going back to the first statement where she said this behaviour carried on until approximately May/June time. That was before she was even an employee if she started work in June.

**Mr McCrea:** Yes. I don't know the contractual thing, but you will be aware that she was formally interviewed by [REDACTED] The post was advertised and that she did have to apply and go through on that, but she did get appointed. I am sorry, I cannot remember the date exactly, but it would have been at a different time.

**Mr Bain:** So, during the period, because she worked for a period as a volunteer, and, at that time, she could've walked away if there was anything unacceptable in your behaviour.

**Mr McCrea:** That is a matter of record that she could have walked away at any time. You might say, Commissioner, that some people would say, "Well, maybe she was hoping to get a job" or this sort of thing, but I can tell you she left on 1 November, and she gave glowing accolades about what had happened during her time there. She continued to be in contact after 1 November.



- A. In fact, no later than 2 May 2014, she was still tagging and liking Facebook posts about our election literature and mentioning my name and whatever. So, there was no indication of any concerns at any time.

**Mr Bain:** Why did she leave your employment?

**Mr McCrea:** She had a problem. She lived in the [REDACTED] There was one bus that got her to Lisburn shortly after 10.00 am. She felt that this was costing her a lot of money because she missed the bus, so she was getting a taxi all the time. So, she was getting a taxi from [REDACTED] to Lisburn and then getting a taxi back again, and it was costing her a lot of money. What she reckoned was that she could – I will see if I can find it; I do have an email on that – if I draw your attention to appendix 9.

**Mr Bain:** Yes, I have it.

- B. **Mr McCrea:** That's just an email from Ashleigh Murray on 28 October, and, bearing in mind that she left on 1 November, you can see that she would get a taxi into work in the morning and also get a taxi home. We had changed her contract originally to let her get the bus. This sounds crazy, but we asked her when she joined, "What time could you get to Lisburn for?", and she said, "10.00am". So, her contract was 10.00am until whatever. Then, it turned out that she couldn't get there to 10.00am, so we said, "When can you get there?", and she said, "The bus says 10.03am, but it gets there at 10.15am, so we said, "What about if we say 10.30am then?"

**Mr Bain:** Did you change her lunch hour from an hour to half an hour?

**Mr McCrea:** We made accommodations in her contract to change to 10.30am. That is highlighted in the note that I gave you at the performance review. Then, it transpires that we get to hear that one week before that she is still getting the taxi, and, to be honest with you, that is when we knew it was happening, that timekeeping was a problem for her. She would get the taxi to come back in. So, my understanding was that the reason why she took a new job was that it was on a bus route that she might be able to save a bit of money, but I do believe that she enjoyed her job.

- C. She liked her job; it's just that there were some issues, and we did try awfully hard to accommodate her in all of these issues. I think that you will agree it is exceptionally for somebody that is only there on a six-month contract to be trying to negotiate what time she will and will not come in.

**Mr Bain:** OK. Is there anything further you feel you should say to me about the matters we have touched on today, bearing in mind you will have an opportunity next week?

**Mr McCrea:** Could you just give me a second to see? Can I just for the record draw your attention to appendix 7D? This is just me tidying up just to make sure that we have it. This is a Facebook tag on 2 May 2014. Remember that the election was on 22<sup>nd</sup>. That is whenever she went to the media. This is some time before.

- A. You see here it says, "Looking good", and she hash tags Basil McCrea and this is our election literature, so, at this time, you would have thought there wasn't a problem.

We are going to deal with the issue of Alan Patterson at a second time. I do want to give you some documents on that, but do you want me to do that now or –

**Mr Bain:** I am very happy to take them now.

**Mr McCrea:** They are in the pack. I will just refer you to them. I know we are not going to discuss them, but just so that you know, if I can refer you to what I think is appendix 5.

**Mr Bain:** Yes. It is an email from Mr Patterson from 15 August.

- B. **Mr McCrea:** Yes. So, this is just given for the record. You will see that he says, "We discussed a different role for me", and you can see by the tone of what he was saying, you can read it and draw your conclusion.

**Mr Bain:** I will look at these before we next meet.

**Mr McCrea:** Just so that you know what you have got, there is an issue out, this is just a new addition - 31 July - about the role which Alan Patterson was operating in. Just for the record, so that you have it, because you were interested about my management style, appendix 1, we were talking about this. If I just bring them back to you, but I just think these are important about the issues that we have done. So, this is about management style. You can see text messages between Jacquelyn and Basil McCrea. You can see that we have had a little bit of a fight. I am sorry the date appears to be missing off this, but I will get you the date. Oh, no, it isn't. It is there – 15 October 2013.

- C. So, she sends me a message here, Commissioner, just saying she is not happy, and I come back and say this, and then there is a little bit of an argument, but the thing that it says is, "I know that you are not lazy and neglectful. We need to deal with the issue and then we resolve it".

**Mr Bain:** I think I am going to, at the next meeting, deal with the other allegation of a non-sexual nature in regards to Ms Neglia, so it may be more appropriate to deal with these then.

**Mr McCrea:** Just so that I have got it for you, I am happy to deal with it, but just so that you know what you are looking at because this is an email sent on Christmas Day from Jacquelyn Neglia to me and you can see that she makes statements, "Of all the gifts I have received this year, having the chance to go to Northern Ireland and work at Stormont for you has been by far the best", so she is not unhappy there.

The second block says, "I know we often fight, but I am glad to have a boss that wants to hear my opinion, despite not always agreeing with it. I really value you as a boss and as a person, and I cannot thank you enough for the opportunity you have given me this year". So, that is pretty positive. You can see that I reply on that just saying, "Listen, we have a lot of work ahead of us. Come back". Obviously, there were certain developments in her life that complicated matters.

- A. Finally, you have got the last page there. This just to show you that, in and around, not in or around, but on 4 September, this is Ashleigh Murray saying, "A big thank you to Basil McCrea MLA". All I am saying is this is just representative samples of information. I have complete documentation, emails, text messages, Twitter accounts, all of which show that the interaction was positive, and, where there were problems, I tried to handle them in as sensitive a nature I could, and at no time in these public issues or even in the private issues did anything that would support the allegations come up.

**Mr Bain:** OK. Thank you for that. That is helpful. Now, the time is now 12.49 pm, and we will conclude this interview.



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Date:** 11 June 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner

██████████ Notetaker

Basil McCrea MLA

**Time Started:** 2.30 pm

**Time Ended:** 3.00 pm

- A. DB: OK. This is a continuation of the interview of Basil McCrea MLA, taking place in room 283 in Parliament Buildings on 11 June 2015. The time is now 2.30 pm. Present are Douglas Bain, [REDACTED] and Basil McCrea.

Mr McCrea, can I remind you that you are still under oath?

BM: Absolutely.

DB: Before we come to the matters we weren't able to deal with on Tuesday, could I just go back to something you told me in relation to various photographs you'd taken on your trip to Canada?

- B. BM: Uh-huh.

DB: Did I understand you to tell me that all the photographs you took were automatically loaded on to your computer in your office?

BM: Yes. It goes — It's an automatic process. It's a link between the phone camera that goes to the cloud and then the cloud syncs with the iMac in the office, and that's every photograph.

- C. DB: I'm sure that's right. I'm afraid it means very little to me.

Now, then, can I ask you, you may recall that, on Tuesday, I was unable to find various photographs. I've taken the opportunity of — [Inaudible.] — to look them out. Can I show you first a rather poor quality photograph labelled JMCC13A? I think that appears to be a photograph of a person, presumably a woman, wearing a red, patterned dress.

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: Do you have any recollection of taking such a photograph?

- A.** BM: I could well have taken the photograph, though I will point out that it's unlikely that I would've zoomed in, you know. That's been cropped.

DB: So the original image would have shown many other — something else.

BM: It was, you can see that it's raining, and part of what the photograph was about was we were in beautiful sunny weather and we got soaked.

DB: And who is the person shown in the photograph?

- B.** BM: Well that would be, that would be Jacquelyn Neglia.

DB: Can I show you another photograph, JMCC13B? That appears to be a photograph of the same person.

BM: Yes.

DB: And it appears to have been taken at a filling station.

- C.** BM: It was indeed at a filling station, yes. And, again, that's been cropped.

DB: And can I show you the third photograph that's been provided to me, JMCC13C? It's actually quite difficult to work out what that's a photograph of.

BM: That is a nonsense. That is clearly zoomed way, way in. I mean, what could that be? It could be anything. I have not seen that particular image.

DB: Now, it appears, as best as I could work out, to show the lower legs of a person wearing a high-heeled shoe, showing the legs from about the knee downwards, in the case of one leg, and down to the ankle on the other. Would you still have the originals of these photographs?

- A. BM: Em, the, I would've had, except that they were deleted. So somebody on my computer, I know not who, but one of the people with the passwords — Jacquelyn Neglia, Ashleigh Murray or whatever — deleted photographs. So the photographs I no longer have in my possession, but I can tell you categorically I did not take a photograph like that.

DB: So, as I understand your position, this image in 13C is a small part of an image you took.

BM: I'm only surmising that. I mean you could not tell anything from that image, but I can tell you — you can just look at how pixelated, how blurred, you know. And I said the same thing about the other thing that those images are not images that I took, in the sense of, you know, the pictures put forward. Any images I took would've been of a much wider expanse.

- B. DB: Is it possible, without — sorry, I'll start again. Plainly it would be possible forensically to identify the password of the person who carried out the deletions. Can that be done readily or —

BM: Unfortunately, I think it's, I think it's too late to have, to have done that, because it was just a log on. You know, it wasn't as if the computer wasn't password protected. It was, but because you had four or five people sat in a room, it's a real problem with all passwords. People shout out, you know, "what's the password for this?", and it was something like [REDACTED], which was the name, you know, the room of my, sorry, my room number. It would have been widely known, and — sorry, widely known within the office — and the computer was used for multiple functions, so some people will have been using it to do Facebook and Twitter and other people would've been using it to do video editing, so I'm afraid I can't help.

- C. DB: Is it possible to tell when the deletions were made?

BM: Uh, I would need to check but I'm not sure. I think all that happens — you know there's a great big catalogue of every, of every photograph. All I can tell you is that I didn't delete anything. I just know that there are — those images are no longer — or anything like them — are no longer available on the computer.

DB: OK. Thank you.

- A. BM: And, just for the record, they go through iCloud, but I think I'm right in saying that — though they might've been deleted as well — that they only retain the last 1,000. So I'm afraid they're lost.

DB: Then can we move on to some of the matters we didn't deal with last time? And the first area I want to touch on is your alleged non-sexual conduct towards Ashleigh Murray.

BM: Uh-huh.

- B. DB: And the first issue I want to explore is the allegation that you constantly checked up on her about her timekeeping.

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: And can I just explore the background a little? Could I ask you to look at document TR9, which, I think, is, in effect, her contract?

- C. BM: Yes. Indeed.

DB: Which is signed by her on 8 July 2013. I think on the last page.

BM: Yes.

DB: And, if you look at section 8 of that document —

BM: Excuse me. Section 8, yes.

DB: Does that show her hours of work and the time she started her employment, as Monday to Friday, 10 am to 5 pm?

A. BM: It does indeed.

DB: And I think you told me on Tuesday that, at her request, that had been changed to 10.30 till 5 pm; still Monday to Friday but with a 30-minute lunch break instead of a one-hour lunch break.

BM: That's correct, and I also provided you with a performance review document carried out by others that indicated there was an issue with timekeeping, but to try and address — Miss Murray had said that she couldn't make it for 10 o'clock because the bus was late, and, so, we tried to accommodate her.

B. DB: Now, can I ask you to look at a document, which is understand was provided by Miss Murray to Carecall, and it's a weekly timesheet, essentially, signed, apparently by Miss Murray on 16 August 2013? Is that right?

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: And, eh, Miss Murray says that this demonstrates that you were well aware that her start time was to be 10.30 and that that had been the position from the start: although her contract said 10 o'clock, you'd agreed to it being 10.30.

C. BM: Um, Miss Murray had photocopied a lot of the timesheets with my signature on it, so I can't tell if that is one of the ones, but, when I was in the office, I came across a bundle of, perhaps, a dozen of them — so of my photographed signature but without any details filled in. But it is quite clear, and I don't know if you're coming to this page in a second — are you coming to this?

DB: Perhaps.

BM: Only to say that it says in there, "Ashleigh Murray 10 until 5" and it's 10 to 5 in the contract, and we have a written performance review that says there is an issue with 10 o'clock. If I give you that.

A. DB: Just to remind me — the performance review, was that in, which folder was that in?

BM: If you would just give me a moment for me to find it. This is appendix 7c. So, if you look, Commissioner, "attendance and punctuality" is underlined.

DB: Yeah, but I think the significant part is that this was a performance review taking place on 22 July, nearly a month before the timesheet that I've just shown you.

B. BM: The timesheet is a month before this. The timesheet is 16 August and this is 18 of the ninth, September.

DB: Oh sorry. So the change to her working hours —

BM: Took place —

DB: To 10.30 —

BM: Took place —

DB: Took place after this performance review.

C. BM: Correct. Because it actually notes in there, it says in bold at the next line, "Ashleigh's contract does state 10 am. However, Ashleigh had confirmed with Basil and Alan that she cannot get the bus into Lisburn until 10.20". That's not actually correct; the bus gets in at 10.03 or thereabouts, but, realistically, she could only start at 10.30. The point that I am making, Commissioner, is that it says here — let me just find the point. If I can just draw you to the third paragraph, about the fourth line, "Ashleigh also understands that there have been issues with trust around people's understanding with start times". So the issue was addressed with her formally and said to her, "Look, even if you have got reasons that you can't come in for 10, tell us and we will change the contract". And the contract was amended to do that, and I also — I think I've given you the information that — I'll find it for you — that she wrote a letter to Suzanne Chalkley —

DB: We'll come to that.

A. BM: Oh we'll come to that. OK.

DB: Just for completeness, on that weekly timesheet I've shown you, there's some writing in blue ink. Do you recognise the writing?

BM: Not particularly. I don't actually, but — But. No I don't.

DB: OK. She, Miss Murray, alleges that you constantly questioned her about her timekeeping. Is it fair to say there was a problem with her timekeeping?

B. BM: There was a problem with her timekeeping. Though you'll also be aware, Commissioner, that I had asked other people to manage, more directly, Ashleigh Murray. The performance review indicates that she does need more management support, and so she was getting supported by others.

DB: OK. Did you, eh, on any occasion, go to the bus stop in [REDACTED] to see if she was waiting at it at the time?

BM: No. Never.

C. DB: Did you ever ask anyone else to do that?

BM: No.

DB: You see, I have an email from someone called [REDACTED] saying that you'd asked him to go to the bus stop at [REDACTED]

BM: I'd like to see that, if I may.

DB: Well, I'll certainly provide you with a copy. I haven't got it at the moment.



- A. BM: I have — I answered you honestly. I have no recollection of that. I mean, to be clear, there was an issue with the timekeeping, but it was one of trying to accommodate. You know, I mean, this was a lady that was on a six-month probationary period, where, whenever we said there was a problem with the bus or whatever, we would make adjustments. So I, we, she was trying to be offered support at all sorts of levels and she did have a problem with punctuality.

DB: Do you consider that you did anything inappropriate in relation to Miss Murray's timekeeping?

BM: No. I asked for other people to manage it properly. It was written up formally. The interview was conducted by two female colleagues. I think there were two interviews actually, but, certainly, one you've got the notes for that dealt with the issue specifically. And, as is shown by this email that I — I don't know if it's appropriate to introduce it now, Commissioner — but it was this shows that, even though we changed her contract to 10.30 —

- B. DB: I'm just going to come to that, and I think what you are referring to is appendix 9

—

BM: That's correct. Yes.

DB: In my case, it's a blue folder. And that's an email, I think, sent by Ashleigh Murray to Suzanne Chalkley.

BM: Uh-huh, who was looking after her, yes.

- C. DB: And it's 28 October, which was just less than a week before Ashleigh Murray left, asking that she work a longer day, but four days a week, because that would save her money on taxi fares. So, it would appear from that that, although there was a bus service, and that although her hours had been changed to accommodate her, she was still incurring substantial cost using taxis.

BM: Yes, and, obviously, had she been able to get in in time for 10.30, the bus would have been absolutely the obvious way to go.

- A. DB: It's also — I'm struggling to reconcile that email with someone who claims that, less than a week later, she left because of your appalling conduct.

BM: Correct, and even, um, although I can't provide absolute documentary evidence for you, I do have a series of messages that follow on from the one that I gave you two days ago, which said, you know, "I'd be back in a heartbeat", that there were further text messages that were related to a conversation that said she would like to come back; she worried that she'd made a mistake.

DB: Well, we'll come back to that in a moment.

- B. Then can I move to a different subject? This is an allegation by Miss Murray that, without telling her, you removed cash, which was apparently from the sale of t-shirts, from the Lisburn office, and because she didn't know you'd taken it, this caused her great distress. What do you say to that?

BM: I've only a vague recollection. I mean I was down in the office and I, Miss Murray was not there, and there was cash sitting around. It was lying out in an office. I do recall picking it up, but, from recollection — and I am vague on this — but, from recollection, I waited for her to come back. You know, I wasn't there to do the cash. I was just waiting for her to come back and talked about it. I just can't remember, but I don't remember it being a major issue with. It wasn't, you know, I didn't, I mean, it's not good to leave cash out on a table, but that's all I can recall.

- C. DB: Then can we come to another suggestion? We touched on this in relation to another matter on Tuesday. Did you, when Miss Murray moved to the Lisburn office, I think the office was being established when she went there —

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: She alleges that you instructed her to arrange the delivery of furniture that you had in store. Is that correct?

- A. BM: Again, I only have a limited recollection of the point, but I do have emails from Alan Patterson, which we've touched on before, where he said that he was going to be dealing with the issue.

DB: Perhaps I could just show you — this was provided to me by Mr Patterson, this document, marked AP3.

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: And, eh, reading short, Mr Patterson says that, "Ashleigh's arranging the delivery of furniture", to which you respond, "What furniture?", or words to that effect.

- B. BM: It could well have, it could well have been the case. I didn't know what furniture she was — I mean it was a small office at the very top of —

DB: But, if you had instructed her to arrange the delivery of the furniture from the store, it would be hard to reconcile that with you saying to Mr Patterson, "What furniture?", because you would know what furniture.

BM: I know that there was furniture in a store. It had come from my previous office in Lisburn and it was there, but I don't recall instructing Miss Murray, you know, to do anything about it. I certainly would not have been saying to her, you know, strap it on your back and carry it up yourself or anything like that. It was, eh, I mean it says, "all it needs is a small table and a few chairs".

- C. DB: Were you directly involved in equipping the Lisburn office?

BM: No. Not really. I was on holiday, actually, I think, from memory, during that period of time. I think it was Mr Patterson and, I think, Ashleigh Murray was using her initiative, which was to be encouraged. The two of them were working, you know, together on it. But it wasn't — the whole idea about the new office, frankly, was it was really just a place to have a telephone and a broadband connection. You couldn't have a constituency office in it because there was no accessibility — you had to go up too high — but you did need somewhere where you could get, you know, your Internet to work. The real issue was to be down in the café below or walking around in the constituency.

A. DB: Then —

BM: If you, just since you — oh sorry, have you finished that point?

DB: Yes.

BM: I don't know if shown you this bit. This is just — now, I don't know that this ties in completely, but this is some months earlier, and it's just showing a friendly discussion where, "we need you to go and help", you know, a friendly conversation, but this is some two months earlier, and this bottom one down here, as you can see, is from Alan Patterson, where he's saying, "Part of her role at work will be getting the office ready". And this is, he's talking to me, as you can see, "How's the holiday going?". So I'm on holiday when all of this is happening.

B. DB: Thank you. Just so it's on the record, that's appendix 6 of the folder.

BM: Yes.

DB: Then can I just finish off on Miss Murray? Did it come as a surprise when she left on 5 November?

BM: Em, yes, yes, yes, it did. I mean, I was actually in the constituency. Miss Murray went to a — sorry, I was in the constituency office — Miss Murray went with me to a Man Matters event about 600 or 700 yards away from the office.

C. We actually had a morning when we were working. We then went back to the constituency office where we met a young lady that had anorexia that Miss Murray had been instrumental in bringing together. We went through a whole lot of action plans about what they would do. The two of them had — [inaudible.] So we were doing this. Now this brought us up to about lunchtime. I went and had a meeting upstairs with some other constituents, leaving Miss Murray and some others downstairs, and, when I came back down, she had left and told people that that was goodbye. So that was the amount of notice that I got. I mean, up until lunchtime, I was giving her work and doing things, and we were agreeing this, so it was something of a surprise, yes.

- A.** DB: And do I take it from that then that she didn't give the one week's notice, which paragraph 14 of her contract required?

BM: Absolutely not. As you will realise, Commissioner, that gave some problems for me with Assembly payroll because they were, you know, asking me what happened, do you have a letter of resignation, do you have, you know, anything, and I didn't actually.

DB: And then can I ask you to look at a copy of a document that was provided to me by Miss Murray, labelled AM3? And I think if I ask you to look at the text in the middle at the top. It's a document that you've also shown me.

- B.** BM: Yeah.

DB: From Miss Murray, on the day she left —

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: 1 November, and it starts off, "it really broke my heart to leave".

BM: Yes.

- C.** DB: And, em, you've read the rest of it.

BM: Uh-huh.

DB: Then can I also ask you to look at appendix 7a? 1c in the folder.

BM: Yes.

**A.** DB: And that's something posted on Facebook by Miss Murray on 4 September.

BM: Yes.

DB: So, just under two months before she left

BM: Yes.

DB: And she refers to her doing exams in business administration. It goes on, "Big thanks to Basil McCrea MLA for giving me the opportunity".

**B.** BM: Yes. Smiley xx.

DB: You see, I have difficulty reconciling that and the previous texts we've referred to with someone who was so unhappy about your conduct.

BM: Absolutely, and, Commissioner, I've already told you that I have extensive copies of text messages, emails and whatever. I haven't bored you with the totality of it, but all of the indication was someone who was happy and content, albeit, occasionally, with, you know, a little gripe, but nothing that anybody was unhappy with.

**C.** DB: And then, in addition, we have the note of the, we have the email to Suzanne Chalkley less than a week before she left, asking for a change in her work hours.

BM: Yes.

DB: So she could continue.

BM: Yes. And, just, if I, I did mention, I didn't realise that you had it, can I just mention, "Are you free in 20 minutes for a quick chat? I will call you." That was the chat that I said where I don't think she got to speak to me.

- A.** I think she got to speak to somebody else to say, "Look I wasn't sure whether" — she wasn't sure whether she wanted to go or not. So she was torn.

DB: OK. Now can I just take these ones back?

BM: Sure.

DB: Otherwise I'll get even more confused.

- B.** BM: Yes. That's the trouble with all this paper.

DB: Then can we move on to Karen Tabahe? Is that how you pronounce it?

BM: That's how you pronounce it. It is, yes.

DB: Now, the allegation is that you shouted at Karen on several occasions during the period February to mid-April 2013, to the extent that she went off work sick due to stress —

Recording stops after 29 mins and 12 seconds.





## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Date:** 23 June 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Basil McCrea MLA

**Time Started:** 10.04 am

**Time Ended:** 11.05 am

- A. DB: This is the further interview of Basil McCrea MLA taking place in room 283, Parliament Buildings on Tuesday 23 June 2015, and the time is now 10.04 am. Present are Douglas Bain, Basil McCrea and [REDACTED] Mr McCrea, as you know, we last met on 11 June, and, unfortunately, the recording of that interview terminated after 29 minutes, so the purpose of this interview in the main is to deal with those matters that we did deal with on 11 June but which were not recorded.

BM: OK.

- B. DB: May I remind you you are still under oath?

BM: Indeed.

DB: Before we come to that, can I just ask you on a couple of points? You perhaps remember that we discussed an allegation that had been made about you allegedly instructing Ashleigh Murray to have furniture delivered from store to the Lisburn office and then allegedly denying that you'd instructed that, and I think you said to me that your recollection was that you were on holiday at the time of that.

- C. BM: Yes.

DB: Could I ask you to look at a document which you provided to me last time, and that is appendix 6(b) got from the blue folder?

BM: Yes, indeed.

DB: And I think that's an email from Alan Patterson to you on 23 July.

BM: Yes.

- D. DB: And you see it starts off talking about part of Ashleigh's job being to get the office ready, and that would include furniture.

BM: Yes.

DB: But it finishes off, "How's the holiday going? You must be some shade of brown by now."

BM: Yes.

DB: Does that accord with your recollection that you were on holiday at the time that this was supposed to have happened?

BM: Indeed.

A. DB: Thank you very much.

Then, also clearing up matters from a previous interview, you recall I asked you if you had tried to influence Karen Tabahe in any way to write to me saying that she didn't wish to complain, and you said you had nothing to do with that at all.

BM: Absolutely. She did inform me that she had written, but I neither instigated nor actually know what's in her letter.

DB: And just for the sake of completeness, because I couldn't find the letter last time we met, can I show you a document marked DB4? Do you recognise Karen's signature on that?

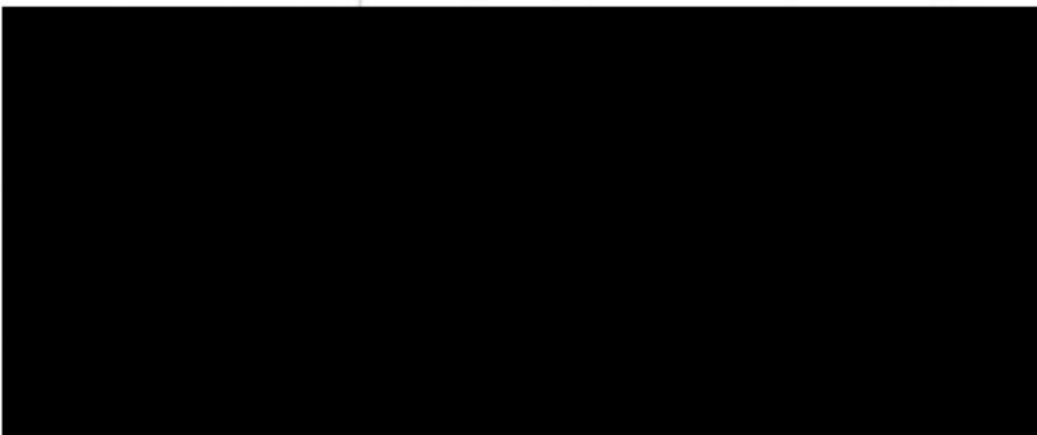
B. BM: Yes. That would be Karen's signature, yes.

DB: And I think she's rather elevated me, addressing the letter to me as Sir Douglas Bain.

BM: Maybe better things to come. But, yes, that would be her signature.

DB: Now can we move then to various other allegations that have been made? And I want to deal first with Jacquelyn Neglia. We have dealt with the alleged improper sexual conduct towards her, and I want to deal with the other matters this morning.

C.



D. DB: It is further alleged by Miss Neglia that, whilst you were doing a down-the-line radio interview, she entered the office and that you threw a baseball which struck her on the head. What do you say about that?

BM: Well, first of all, the incident she's describing, it was on air, so I suspect if I had thrown a baseball and hit her on the head that you would've heard what had happened. But the actual facts behind it were that we knew that the interview was coming up and everybody in the office had been warned to be quiet and then Miss Neglia had left and come back in, banging the door, which is clearly audible on the live stream, and I crumpled a piece of paper and threw it at her, which did not go anywhere near her or hit her, it was only — and I pointed, "I'm on the phone", and that was the whole bit to it.

- A. And there was another person in the room who would confirm that, but I definitely did not throw a baseball and I definitely did not hit her in any shape or form.

DB: It is further alleged that, on a number of occasions, you made jokes about her sleeping around and, on one occasion, said that she'd slept with the entire Canadian hockey team, which I think was the team at the World Police and Fire Games.

BM: The only conversation I will have had with her was about how partying too hard for too long mustn't have an effect on her work during the office hours, and it was a friendly chat.

- B. The environment that we were in was meant to be of a friendly nature, and you will be aware, Commissioner, that I have provided you with an email from Miss Neglia where she explains that we do have a good, if challenging, relationship.

DB: And in that regard can I just refer you to appendix 1(b) in the blue folder? Is that the text of an email you received from Miss Neglia on Christmas Day 2013?

BM: Indeed.

DB: And in it, amongst other things, does she say, "Of all the gifts I received this year, having the chance to go to Northern Ireland and work at Stormont for you and NI21 has, by far, been the best"?

- C. BM: Yes, indeed, that is what she said.

DB: And after referring to the fact that you often fight, do I take it that wasn't physical fighting?

BM: Absolutely not physical fighting. She was a woman of some opinions, and she was not shy in putting forward those opinions, not all of which were correct in my opinion, but nevertheless we would have a debate, sometimes a fairly heated debate, but nothing untoward and certainly no fighting of any physical nature.

- D. DB: And does she go on, "I really value you as a boss and as a person, and I cannot thank you enough for the opportunity you have given me this year"?

BM: That is correct.

DB: And I think you replied to that on New Year's Day of 2014 saying, "So enjoy your break and steel yourself for the challenges to come. It will require your entire focus, hard work and commitment, but it will be worth it. It is not a game; it is deadly serious", and so on.

BM: Absolutely.

DB: And then can I also ask you to look at another document you've helpfully provided in appendix 4 of the same folder.

A. BM: Indeed.

DB: And is that the text of something written by Miss Neglia or sent by Miss Neglia to [REDACTED] who, at that time, was the party chair. Is that right?

BM: That is correct. In January 2014, so just after the Christmas break.

DB: And, in it, does she say, amongst other things, "I can say without a doubt that the trip was a turning point in my life. After my experience working with Basil, I was certain I wanted to be a politician and that I wanted to effect change."

BM: She does indeed say that.

DB: And is she in fact— is that in fact an application for a permanent job?

B. BM: Yes. That's an application to be the NI21 youth director. Of course, later on there were changes in Miss Neglia's circumstances, but that was what she was applying for, indeed.

DB: So despite all these allegations that she's made about you — both the ones we covered previously about sexual impropriety and the ones we've covered this morning — she was saying she really valued her time working with you, valued you as a boss and, indeed, wanted to continue to work for the party?

BM: Indeed. And was talking to independent people, so had there been any issues, could be brought up, and I think these issues were probed by [REDACTED] amongst others.

C. DB: OK. Can we leave Miss Neglia and move on to Mr Nigel Macauley? And my understanding is — but correct me if I'm wrong — that he started work at Stormont on 13 January 2014 for NI21 but that he'd previously worked for Mr John McCallister MLA.

BM: Yes, I can confirm that.

DB: And when he came across on 13 January, he continued to work 60% for Mr McCallister but 40% for NI21.

BM: That is correct.

D. DB: And so were his wages and expenses paid for in the same proportion?

BM: In the same proportion.

DB: So that would be 60% out of Mr McCallister's OCA and 40% out of the NI21 FAP?

BM: That is correct.

DB: Did he ever work for you in your capacity as an MLA?

A. BM: No, he did not.

DB: And am I correct in thinking that he stopped working after the elections in May 2014?

BM: Correct.

DB: Now you were the party leader at the time Mr Macauley started working for NI21. Were you involved in his recruitment?

B. BM: No, actually not. We'd had a discussion just prior to December where we talked about staffing and although Mr Macauley's name had come up, I was not in favour largely because of experience and the fact that he was a member of another political party.

DB: And did you come back from being away from Stormont to discover that he had in fact been appointed without your knowledge.

BM: Yes, Commissioner. In fact, I provided you previously with a set of text exchanges between myself and John McCallister. I became alerted to the fact that he'd been appointed by social media. So, I did ask Mr McCallister about it, and I was surprised and I did note that I had a problem with that.

C. DB: And just remind me is that appendix 10(a)?

BM: Yes, that is correct. Appendix 10(a) shows a conversation between myself and Mr McCallister MLA asking is Nigel Macauley working for us. He replies, "Yes. Met up with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] — that would be [REDACTED] — "a couple of times, and we decided to get on with it". And then you'll note, Commissioner, this just pointing to an email where I asked [REDACTED] about it, and she said, "Yes, John had some money left in his local funds," — that's his OCE or OCA.

And that was —. But that was obviously in contradiction to what later came through, because as you'll see in the exchange of 13 January 2014 at 2.48 pm, Mr McCallister says, "You" — that's me Basil McCrea — "have £10,000.

D. I have £3,000 and FAP has £5,000, which would almost be enough to pay for him". And I was saying, "Well, I don't think that's great". And the continuation, just in case you wish to ask me about it, is a further conversation some hours later — in fact, a day later — where I ask, "Have you appointed Nigel Macauley as director of communication?", and he comes back and says, "Unofficially yes, but officially no." And then he says, "You'd be better off relaxing on holiday on this".

So, this appointment took place without my knowledge or support.

DB: And had you been aware of the proposal, would you have concurred in it or did you have concerns about Mr Macauley?

- A. BM: I would have had concerns, not least of which is because there were significant demands on the party in other areas and we might have considered where we would have spent available funds, but I would not have been supportive.

DB: Now, it is alleged that there were a number of arguments between you and Mr Macauley and I want to ask you about some of these. It is alleged that there was a very heated and lengthy meeting between you and Mr Macauley about his job description.

BM: Yes. That's correct.

DB: What brought that about?

- B. BM: So, that was on my return from holiday. I'd been delayed for 24 hours and obviously, as soon as possible, I went up to the party offices to discuss general things and Mr Macauley was there. The point of dispute was that Mr Macauley was intent in calling himself a "director of communications" and he had also written his own job description, which was so all-encompassing: it was a bigger job description than the President of United States. It was huge and, frankly, in my opinion, could not have been implemented.

DB: Am I right that, prior to becoming a MLA, you had some expertise in IT matters?

BM: Yes. I have a masters with first-class honours in informatics, which is advanced social media, and I ran an IT company that did web development and suchlike.

- C. DB: And I think you've also given expert evidence in the High Court on IT matters.

BM: I have indeed. I was called as an expert witness and had to explain to the judge and others.

DB: So, did you consider yourself in a good position to judge the feasibility of the job description?

BM: I thought I had significant and relevant experience.

DB: Now, during that interview, Mr Macauley alleges that you shouted and swore at him.

- D. BM: I can't recall the specifics, but I had relatively little engagement with Mr Macauley, but he did bring down to me on one occasion a leaflet that he had printed up and wished to publish. That leaflet, Commissioner, is provided to you in appendix 10c and as you can see, there is a scribble across it — "not agreed", "not agreed by me" — and this is because, as you will see, for the sum of £500, sponsors were being offered a private, one-to-one lunch with either myself or John McCallister and this is dangerously close to cash for questions and



certainly, in my opinion, showed the political naivety of Mr Macauley. We had a discussion about that.

- A. DB: But was that at a different meeting from the one I've been talking about?

BM: There was possibly one other meeting. I mean, we're talking either two or three incidents in totality, of which the first one was the one that you talked about about the director of communications. There may have been a discussion about Mr Macauley doing web design or taking — I can't remember the exact substance of it, but I did explain to him this is what we've already been doing for some time.

DB: Can I just take you back, though, to this meeting about his job description —

BM: Yes.

- B. DB: — and the allegation that you shouted and swore at him at that meeting? Do you have any recollection of that?

BM: Not — I can recall that it was a heated discussion, but there were others in the room, including [REDACTED] so it was no more than a firm exchange of views. Mr Macauley was being very adamant that he would be called what he wanted to be called and he would write his own job description, and I was explaining to him that I was the party leader and beside me was the party chair, and that that would not be the case. So, it would have been heated, but not anything out of order, I wouldn't have thought.

- C. DB: Now, another of the allegations relates to a meeting which is said to have taken place in your office about the website. I take it that would be the NI21 website?

BM: That would be the NI21 website.

DB: Mr Macauley alleges that you asked him for guidance — sorry; that he asked for guidance on some of the changes he wanted made and you responded, "Where do you think you are? Are you in fucking kindergarten?" Did you say that?

BM: I can't recall the precise conversation, but I do recall that there was an incident where Mr Macauley came down and wanted to discuss the website. We did have an exchange of views and eventually Mr Macauley came back down later on in the afternoon where I took him through all of the things that we were already doing on the website. I just explained to him that these things were in hand.

DB: Is the phrase, "Are you in fucking kindergarten?" one that you use?

- D. BM: It wouldn't be a normal use of words for me. I don't think so. I mean, I can't remember the exact words, but I would doubt it.



DB: And Mr Macauley alleges that after you said that, he asked you to stop swearing and you told him to get out.

BM: Mr Macauley was in my office. As I've said, there was a heated exchange and what I have come to develop as a style is that it is better that people take a break and he may have been asked to leave, but it would've been done politely and he did come back later on that afternoon and spent, from recollection, in the order of an hour to two hours with me when I explained to him all of the things that we were doing so that he was, at least, aware that he didn't have to reinvent the wheel.

A.

DB: And then he also claims that there was a meeting about Google Drive, which started in your office, but, because there were other people present and it was noisy, you moved to Mr McCallister's office, which was vacant at the time and in the course of that meeting, which apparently was going quite well, Mr Macauley said words to the effect that he would have to make sure that everything you had said was incorporated in the communications strategy and, at that, you took offence and swore at him.

B.

BM: Well, I can't remember. I honestly can't remember the specific incident, but it would have been quite clear — I made it clear to Mr Macauley and Mr McCallister — that, as party leader, I thought it was my role to decide what the communications strategy would be.

DB: And when we're talking about "communications strategy", this is the NI21 strategy?

BM: All of this is NI21 strategy.

DB: And then, finally, it is alleged that there was some difficulty with an NI21 Youth Twitter account.

C.

BM: Yes. That was an initiative that Mr Macauley undertook without authorisation and caused some concern amongst other members of staff because nobody actually knew who NI21 Youth was and they were apparently tweeting issues and there were — You know, Mr Macauley had had previous problems with this Twitter account, so it was a bit unfortunate really.

DB: And what was Jacquelyn Neglia's role in relation to youth matters at that stage?

BM: Well, she was taking the lead in youth matters and also would have had a fair handle on Twitter on suchlike as it's a way of communicating with the youth, and I know that she was not best pleased with Mr Macauley's unauthorised intervention.

DB: Did you, at any time, bully or harass Mr Macauley?

D.

BM: Absolutely not. I was uncomfortable with him in the role that he was in, but the way that the situation was managed was that he spent, in the first month,

95% of his time with Mr McCallister and, thereafter, the entirety of his time with Mr McCallister.

DB: Now, you've told me that he left after the elections of May 2014. Why was that?

BM: Part of the issue was to do with funding; that the 60/40 split that you had outlined, Mr McCallister felt that he could no longer sustain that on an ongoing basis and Mr McCallister gave him, I think, two months' notice.

- A. We had previously — that is to say the NI21 chair and Mr McCallister and the rest of the executive, I think — discussed the issue and we had said that we did not think that it was a good idea to give notice in advance of the election; that we should wait until afterwards and then we would see what sort of situation the party was in and, you know, we could take it from there.

DB: Was his leaving anything to do with, as far as you could tell, allegedly improper conduct by you?

BM: Absolutely not, as far as I am aware. It was driven by a financial predicament that Mr McCallister found himself in. That is the only reason that I can think of as to why it was terminated.

- B. DB: *[Coughs.]* Sorry, excuse me. Then can we move on to the complaint and allegations made by Mr Alan Patterson? Would I be correct in my understanding that Mr Patterson contacted you in March or April 2013 offering his services?

BM: That would be correct.

DB: And that he started work, working at Stormont on a regular basis sometime around 27 June 2013.

BM: That would be correct.

DB: And that he was no longer involved with NI21 after 10 September of that year?

- C. BM: That is correct, yes.

DB: Was he ever employed by you or paid for out of OCA or FAP?

BM: No. He was never paid by either of those. His work was on a voluntary capacity.

DB: And was his work for you or for NI21?

- D. BM: His work was entirely for NI21. The only place where there might be a bit of overlap is that there were some people that were employed that were also in NI21, so there was a crossover in their roles, but he was utilised entirely for NI21 and not Members' OCA.

DB: Now, what was Mr Patterson's role going to be initially?

BM: One of the challenges facing the party after the launch on 6 June was that we had a lot of volunteers and a lot of people interested in helping but very little in the way of organisation, and so Mr Patterson's role was to try for a bit of structure in the party and see if we could get people working together.

A. DB: Did you ever give him a job title?

BM: No. He assumed the role. In fact, he assumed quite a lot; not just the title but also the role that he felt that he could be best suited in. He did — this did need to be dealt with later on.

DB: Could I ask you to look at an email, AP6, which I think is an email sent by Mr Patterson to Ashleigh Murray? Is that right?

BM: That is correct.

DB: And does he refer there to the role that you asked him to take on?

B. BM: Well, he states here that "my role will no doubt become clearer as Basil thinks more about what he wants me to do". That indicates, Commissioner, that it was a fluid position where we were just seeing what use we could make of matters.

DB: But I think he says in the first paragraph, doesn't he, "Basil wants me to take an overriding role, eg, developing and relating to members and potential members and looking at processes".

BM: Yes, absolutely. Sorry, Commissioner, I was just drawn to the second paragraph, but that is exactly as I have said to you beforehand that it was members, potential members and processes was what he was involved in.

C. DB: So, it was all about NI21.

BM: In its entirety about NI21.

DB: When he came to work as a volunteer, were you aware of his career history?

BM: No.

DB: Were you aware that he had worked at the Assembly at some stage?

D. BM: Yes, he had told me that he had been a senior clerk, extensive experience in Assembly procedures and political matters, and, on that basis, he seemed to be somebody that would be useful to a new and fledgling organisation that he might be able to provide some guidance.

DB: Did he tell you during these discussions of his various disputes with?

BM: No, he didn't mention that at all. The first I became aware of it was that I met somebody in passing, I think, in the canteen, and they just mentioned it to me in passing, so I wasn't aware. They didn't expand, but I did mention it to Mr Patterson at some later stage.

- A. DB: When you mentioned to him at a later stage, what was the nature of it or how did you do that?

BM: It was over a cup of coffee in Café Recess, as I recall. It was part of a longer conversation on a whole range of things. I just said, "Oh, by the way, what's this?", and I have to say, commissioner, I was a little surprised at the vehemence with which Mr Patterson responded. So, immediately, I just, well, we will just let that drop. In the weeks that followed, Mr Patterson did refer to it on a regular basis, but I had no wish to get involved in what was, as far as I was concerned, none of my business.

DB: Could I ask you to look at appendix 5c?

- B. BM: Indeed.

DB: Is that, well, you tell me what it is?

BM: So, that is an email from Alan Patterson sent out on a mass mailing list to members of NI21. So, it is to the membership and it is introducing himself as, "My name is Alan Patterson and I am the party secretary to NI21". The purpose of the email is ostensibly to inform members that there would be a summer school on 10 and 11 August. So, two weeks later.

- C. DB: So, that was just a couple of days after he had started working on a regular basis at Stormont.

BM: Absolutely, yes.

DB: Did you see that email at the time it was issued?

BM: No, I think I was on holiday, or it may well be I just wasn't copied into the list. The one that I am looking at here now is a copy where I was sent a copy of it, but I don't recall actually seeing that letter specifically. As I said, I think I may well have been on holiday at that time.

- D. DB: I suppose if it was sent to party members, you might not have got it.

BM: Yes, because it was for people that had signed up or were at the conference. There was a list that they were trying to create, and they created the list themselves.

DB: You presumably knew that there was something happening in the conference centre in Newcastle in late August.

BM: Absolutely. I knew that that was what was going on, but I had left it with two others to actually do the organisation of it.

DB: OK. You have told me that Mr Patterson assumed the title of party secretary. Did you ever berate him about that?

- A. BM: Mr Patterson was with us for a very short period of time. During that time, he was only working for two days a week, and, during that time, I was on holiday and then he was on holiday. So, the discussions that I had with Mr Patterson were very modest. The only conversation that I had is copied up in the email that said, on reflection, it might be better to find a better role or a different role for Mr Patterson, but it was all done with sensitivity. I do not think there would have been any berating, and, as you will know, Commissioner, Mr Patterson is a very experienced clerk, and if there had been anything of that nature, I am quite sure it would have been documented.

DB: Can I ask you to look at another document, which I have as AP13, but I think it is also in your folder.

- B. BM: Yes.

DB: Is that an email from Mr Patterson dated 15 August 2013?

BM: Yes, that is 15 August. That email is his response to a conversation that we had a few days earlier. It might have been a week earlier, and that had been following my return from holiday at the end of July, and I had talked to members of staff about what was going on and so we were discussing how we might better utilise Mr Patterson's experience.

- C. DB: That was, as envisaged earlier, that roles would be clarified as the party bedded down.

BM: Yes. Roles would be clarified. It was clear that it would be very fluid, and I do think that, putting it gently, Mr Patterson had maybe drifted into an area that wouldn't be entirely appropriate for him to be into, but, nevertheless, we had said we would clarify and we would try to do it in the best possible way.

DB: Had you, for example, become involved to some extent in management of persons employed by you?

- D. BM: Yes. There was, in particular with relation to Ashleigh Murray. As you will be aware, Commissioner, her role transitioned from being a volunteer to being a paid employee. So, there was some overlap when Mr Patterson might quite rightly be involved whenever she was a volunteer, but then, when she became an employee, I think he had a view that maybe he should take managerial responsibility, and that, of course, was not something that would be undertaken without proper consideration.

DB: So, am I right in thinking that, at about the time of this email on 15 August, Mr Patterson ceased carrying out what he described as the party secretary role?

BM: That would have been my understanding that it was clarified for him that that was not what was the best way of going forward, and I had discussed with him a number of options. He might stand as a candidate, he might get involved in policy, but, definitely, it was a change of role from that which he had previously envisaged.



- A. DB: So, if that's right, he only actually had this what he described as party secretary role for about a fortnight.
- BM: It might have been four weeks but two weeks of that I was on holiday.
- DB: I think he didn't start working on a regular basis at the Assembly until the end of July.
- BM: Correct. That's right. That would be correct. A very short period of time. That is correct.
- B. DB: And he was apparently quite content to take on this new role of working with Mr Hutchinson.
- BM: Yes. The AP13 that you have given me mentions, amongst other things, that he had a useful discussion with [REDACTED] in terms of the handover and various things. To all intents and purposes, he was offering that he could help so it seems quite amicable.
- DB: Am I correct in thinking that that new role was entirely for NI21?
- C. BM: Entirely for NI21. It had always been for NI21, but the new role was definitely for NI21.
- DB: Indeed, at one point in that document AP13, he refers to his new role as developing local profile and the NI21 group.
- BM: Yes, that was correct, and that was with a view to him perhaps being a candidate at the next council election.
- DB: And as he also set out in that document in some detail the various claims he had made against various people for different types of improper behaviour towards him and the outcome of these.
- D. BM: Yes. A fairly extensive list of things, which I have previously said were not directly relevant to me, but the email is one third about moving on and two thirds about his past.
- DB: Was that the first time that you had been aware of these in such detail?
- BM: Absolutely.
- DB: It is alleged by Mr Patterson that you and another person, who may either have been an MLA or a member of the secretariat, were spreading malicious rumours about his past. Were you doing any such thing?

- A. BM: I absolutely was not. In fact, as is quite evident, Mr Patterson wished to bring the matter to my attention regularly, and I did not wish to discuss it as it was not relevant to the role that I had and I neither understood the exact nature of his complaints nor felt it was appropriate for me to be discussing them.

DB: Did he ask you who had told you about his past history?

BM: He did, yes.

DB: And did you decline on the basis that your source was confidential?

BM: I did.

- B. DB: He alleges that, on one occasion, you said he suffers from Asperger's syndrome. Is that true?

BM: That is not correct.

DB: Did he suffer from that syndrome, as far you know?

BM: Not to my knowledge. His position was one of being an experienced clerk in the Assembly, and that is all I could attest to.

DB: He alleges that you described him as being bureaucratic, in the insulting sense of that word.

- C. BM: The prime attribute that Mr Patterson brought, as I said at the start of this particular section of the interview, Commissioner, was that we were a new and fledgling organisation that needed some organisation and structure. I would have seen Mr Patterson's strength in this area but I certainly would not have used it in a disparaging way. I would also just add that there is not huge amounts of paperwork to support any suggestion of bureaucracy.

DB: And then he alleges that you spread rumours that he didn't get on with NI21 staff. What do you say to that?

- D. BM: I certainly didn't spread any rumours. I did discuss with him at the time when we were looking at a new role that there were some people that were not clear about his role in relation to them and this was something that needed to be managed correctly.

DB: In particular, in paragraph 29 of his complaint, he claims that you sent the 'News Letter' selected extracts from two emails from him to you purporting to show that NI21 staff had problems with him.



- A. BM: Well, Commissioner, I provided for you in appendix 5d in the pack, which is the article that was run by the 'News Letter' on 22 May, and they contacted me on 21<sup>st</sup> to say that Mr Patterson had volunteered a statement and they put various things to me and all that I did, as you can see there, I responded with a few quotes, but I did not in any way bad-mouth Mr Patterson and, in fact, would not have been involved had he not contacted the 'News Letter' himself in the first instance.

DB: He alleges further that you attempted to undermine his position in NI21. First of all, did he have any official position?

- B. BM: He didn't. At the time that he was with us, NI21 didn't actually exist because it was not properly constituted until November. His role when he first became involved, and always was, was one of an advisory position of to see what he might do to help to bring structure to a new organisation. There was no undermining of any role, and, as was referred to earlier, his particular roles and responsibilities would become clear as the need developed.

DB: Mr Patterson asserts that although he was primarily working for NI21, he did do work for you in your capacity as an MLA, and he says, first of all, that he line-managed Ashleigh Murray.

- C. BM: Well, he didn't. He did have an involvement, a discussion, but, as I mentioned earlier, part of that will have been to do with the transition from Ashleigh Murray being involved here to being a member of staff, but there was no question in my mind of line management, and, in fact, that was one of the areas that I would have clarified with him whenever I came back from holiday. He was not a line manager of anybody.

DB: I think am I right that Ashleigh Murray's line manager was Suzanne Chalkley?

BM: That later on evolved as a result of performance reviews.

DB: Now, he asserts that one of the other areas in which he was working for you in your capacity as an MLA was to provide you with advice on the implications of the Executive Review Committee's report on d'Hondt.

- D. BM: Although he would have been interested in his experience of how Assembly processes would have worked, any of that would have just been for NI21 as a party. It was certainly not for me as an MLA.

DB: And that he also provided you, in your capacity as an MLA, with advice on unparliamentary language.

BM: I have no recollection of that even being raised, but, categorically, he did not provide any services for me in any circumstances as an MLA.

DB: And, finally, as an example, he says that he provided you with advice on the speaking rights you would enjoy as NI21 party leader and says that was for you in your capacity as an MLA.

- A. BM: That is obviously not correct, because, as an MLA, the issue wouldn't arise, but, as a party, there would well have been an inquiry, but it would have been no more than, it was a casual inquiry, and, in fact, we would get proper guidance from the Speaker's Office.

DB: And, in fact, I think the Commission considered that matter and there was a note issued.

BM: That is correct.

DB: But, in any event, regarding the various incidents that we referred to when Mr Patterson alleges that you behaved improperly towards him, are you telling me that these barely took place at all or took place in your capacity as NI21 party leader or as an MLA.

- B. BM: Absolutely. First of all, Mr Patterson was with us for a very short period of time. Secondly, no events that were wrongful or even slightly suspicious took place. There was a clarification of role that was expected and was carried out, and any work that Mr Patterson was involved in its entirety was for NI21 the party and not for me as an MLA.

DB: At least one allegation is that you regularly dumped young people in his office, and he had to find something to do with them. First of all, can I ask did he have an office of his own?

BM: No. He didn't have an office. As he said in AP13, he was only available for two days a week.

- C. DB: Were there occasions when you had young people coming up and they may have been left in the office?

BM: Yes. We had quite extensive either students working as interns over the summer period, or before and after in the sitting period, we would have had people up on work experience. It is a regular thing they have been doing for some time, but they would not have been Mr Patterson's responsibility in any shape or form.

DB: Can I just try and put together Mr Patterson's reasons for leaving. You see he has made all these allegations about you, but I just want to look at some of the other records. Could you look at AP15 please?

- D. BM: I see it.

DB: Well spotted. I think that is an email from Mr Patterson to you on 10 September 2013.

BM: Yes.

DB: Where it says he is withdrawing from active participation in NI21 and he gives the reasons. What does he say there?

- A. BM: He states that he has reflected on the negative impact of the conversations that I have had with undisclosed Assembly staff or Members. He states that he feels that that was by people in the Assembly trying to discredit him and then he says that whilst he can understand why the malicious and wholly incorrect information might have caused you concerns, he is not prepared to work under a cloud of mischief making. So, that was his entire reason for leaving. There is no other mention of any impropriety or lack of substance or different deals. It was entirely to do with that issue. As I have already made clear to you, Commissioner, although Mr Patterson had sought to raise the matter with me on a number of occasions about his previous employment history, I would not get involved in that issue.
- B. DB: And there is no mention there, as far as I can see, of him alleging that you attempted to discredit him by talking about his past history.
- BM: He has been quite precise in saying that it is other members of staff of the Assembly. It is certainly not me, and I didn't do that.
- DB: And then if you look at AP13, which we have also looked at before, is that the earlier email from Mr Patterson to you on 15 August about his new role?
- BM: Yes.
- C. DB: I am sorry; could I just have a quick look at it? Does he narrate there that there had been some discussion about his past history and his suggestion that someone was spreading rumours about him or told you about his past history and you declined to provide the name of the person, and that is as you have told me?
- BM: Yes, that is correct. Yes, it states that you declined to name the individual, and I have already covered that. That was because it was in confidence and not an issue I wish to pursue.
- DB: Can we look at another document appendix 5e? There is this schedule you have compiled of various tweets from Mr Patterson.
- D. BM: Yes. These would be public tweets, and, as far as I am aware, still on the public record.
- DB: In a tweet there on 7 April 2014 does he say, "I resigned as party secretary because Basil promoted himself, does not countenance other opinions and is an empty vessel".
- BM: Yes, it is 7 March for clarity. Yes, that is what he says.
- DB: So, there is nothing there about the misconduct that he alleges in his complaint.
- BM: No misconduct, no allegations of impropriety, no threatening behaviour, nothing.

A. DB: Can you also look at appendix 5d?

BM: Yes, this is the article published by the 'News Letter'.

DB: This is the interview of the 'News Letter' on 22 May 2014.

BM: Yes.

DB: Does he there say, "In terms of why I left, I had a growing perception in terms of Basil's conduct that his behaviour towards staff was not at a level I would expect from" — there were some words missed out — "the leader of a party".

B. BM: I am just finding the point. I do recall that is what he said, yes.

DB: Again, there is no mention of misconduct towards him in that matter, in that article, sorry.

BM: Correct.

DB: If we look at Mr Patterson's complaint, AP2, in paragraph 24, does he say, "My decision to step down as party secretary in September 2013 followed ongoing abusive, defamatory and undermining conduct by Mr McCrea, in conjunction with an anonymous Assembly individual or individuals".

C. BM: That is what it says in the statement, yes.

DB: And he goes on correctly to say that you refused to identify the individual.

BM: I deny any suggestion that I was part of a campaign or to my knowledge that anybody else was.

DB: So, would it be fair to say that Mr Patterson has given a number of different versions as to his reasons for leaving?

BM: At different times and different places, he has had a variety of reasons.

D. DB: And that, as far as I can see of the documents available to me, the first occasion on which he has complained about your conduct towards him was when he made his complaint.

BM: Or perhaps in the 'News Letter' on 22 May. No, he didn't actually mention me; he talked about other people. Yes, the first time was in his complaint. That is correct, commissioner.

DB: And say if you are not aware of this, was that complaint made at a time when he was aware of the Carecall investigation?

- A. BM: Mr Patterson was aware from an early stage of the Carecall investigation. As indicated by his tweets, but you would need to ask him more about that yourself. I can only say that that is what it would appear to be like from my position.

DB: Just dealing with a point of detail, in AP2, paragraph 24, he says, "My decision to step down as party secretary in September 2013". That appears to be factually incorrect.

BM: That is factually incorrect.

- B. DB: First of all, you say that he never was officially party secretary.

BM: Yep.

DB: And, in any event, whatever his job was, it changed in August after he had been in post for about two weeks.

BM: That's correct.

DB: Thank you very much. That concludes all the questions. Is there anything you wish to say to me?

- C. BM: No. I am happy enough. Without labouring the point, Commissioner, you may or may not wish to make reference to it, but I do believe that there have been a number of malicious statements made and that people have conspired together. I will just draw to your attention that there was some active collusion in the preparation of these complaints, but I am sure you will draw your own conclusion about that in any case.

DB: Thank you very much. The time is now 11.05 am. We will terminate this interview.

BM: Thank you very much.



A.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

B.

**Witness:** Basil MCCrea MLA

**Date:** Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015

C.

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner,  
Basil McCrea MLA

D.

**Time Started:** 14:34

**Time Ended:** 14:45

E.

F.

G.

H.



- A. **COMMISSIONER:** Mr McCrea, can I remind you you're still on oath.
- McCREA:** Indeed Commissioner.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Can you confirm that you've received from me an email setting out the areas to be covered in this interview?
- McCREA:** I can confirm that.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Thank you. Now before coming to these matters I wish to apologise to you for three errors that I made during our previous interviews and to put the corrections on the record. First of all you may remember at our interview on 9<sup>th</sup> June I was asking you about the alleged incident at [REDACTED] involving Miss Murray and I suggested to you incorrectly that [REDACTED] was near to Miss Murray's home. Would you take it from me that on checking it is in fact a distance of 2.15 miles?
- D. **McCREA:** I would indeed take that and say Commissioner, that as I was driving in a car ... normally, what I could say was I ... my perception was it was that it was pretty close to home, although I accept that two miles would take maybe 30 minutes to walk.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And also at that meeting, I told you incorrectly that although Miss Murray had set out details of that alleged incident in her complaint, she had failed to mention it in an earlier statement she had made on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014. In fact that was incorrect and she did mention it in broadly speaking the same terms.
- F. **McCREA:** Okay.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** And thirdly when we met on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015, I suggested to you that Nigel Macauley was paid 60% from Mr McAllister's OCE and 40% from NI21 FAPP. Having checked the Assembly records I understand that it was in fact the other way round. It's 60% from NI21 FAPP and 40% from Mr McAllister's OCE.
- H. **McCREA:** I accept that's correct. I said to you I think at the time, I just glanced at a piece of paper and saw 60/40 so that's ... happy to have that clarification.
- COMMISSIONER:** But can I just confirm, was Mr Macauley ever paid out of your OCE?



A.

**McCREA:** No, he was not.

B.

**COMMISSIONER:** Then coming to some new matters. When we met on 11<sup>th</sup> June, we were dealing in some detail with Miss Murray's timekeeping and I asked you if ... if you'd ever asked a [REDACTED] to check if she was at the bus stop in [REDACTED] in the morning and you had no recollection of that. In fact that was another error on my part and the gentleman's name was Neil McNickle. Who was Neil McNickle?

C.

**McCREA:** So I mean the name whenever you said [REDACTED] just didn't register with me at all. But Neil McNickle was a prospective councillor for NI21 from around the [REDACTED] direction and I and my family had signed his nomination papers. So he had I think six nominees out of his ten from my family.

D.

**COMMISSIONER:** And did you ever ask Mr McNickle to check whether Ashleigh was at the bus stop in [REDACTED]?

E.

**McCREA:** Not to my recollection. I mean as you know you've sort of mentioned this to me on a number of times and I've looked at you blankly. It is, of course as you know, a matter of record that there were issues to do with timekeeping and you know, there might have been discussions but I don't recall any specific conversations.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** Then can I come to matters also related to Miss Murray and her dismissal. When we met on 9<sup>th</sup> June you told me that Miss Murray had told you that [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

G.

**McCREA:** You see I actually think I said she had talked about difficulties with her employment. It was all very vague. It wasn't a specific, oh I've had this problem. So I certainly, just for the record, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

H.

**COMMISSIONER:** Well I just want to come to that. You also told me that [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

A. **McCREA:** That's correct.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

B. **McCREA:** No, she never told me that.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

C. **McCREA:** No, she did not tell me that.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

D. **McCREA:** No, she did not tell me that.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

E. **McCREA:** No, she did not.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

F. **McCREA:** I think it would be extremely unlikely.

G. **COMMISSIONER:** Am I correct in thinking that early in 2013, perhaps about March time,  
Miss Murray approached you, asking if there were any employment opportunities?

**McCREA:** That would be correct.

H.

A. **COMMISSIONER:** And could I ask you to look at a document marked DB35. The top one seems to be a text from Miss Murray asking about employment opportunities and saying that she'd ... her role as a young ambassador had come to an end.

**McCREA:** Yes.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** And that was as a young ambassador with the Prince's Trust.

**McCREA:** Yes, that is correct.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**McCREA:** No.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** There don't appear to be any dates on these emails that I have copies of, but my understanding is they were sometime around March 2013.

**McCREA:** It would certainly have been in the early part of the year and were it necessary to get dates, I'm quite sure that there is email correspondence, not these messages between members of my staff and the lady concerned. So we can get a time stamp if we need but it is early in the year.

**COMMISSIONER:** In any event it is plainly before she started work as a volunteer.

**McCREA:** Oh absolutely.

**COMMISSIONER:** And then coming to the end of Miss Murray's employment with you. I think she left on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013.

**McCREA:** That is correct.

**COMMISSIONER:** Do you know whether she'd another job to go to?

**McCREA:** I didn't know at the time, in fact I was in my constituency office with her. We went to meet ... the Tonagh male health meeting and then we went back to the constituency office and I had another meeting that I had to take in the office in private

- A. and when I finished with that meeting she had gone. So you know, there was no letter of resignation or anything else. That was the end of it.
- COMMISSIONER:** So I take it from that she did not give the one week's notice required by her contract?
- B. **McCREA:** No, she did not give any notice at all.
- COMMISSIONER:** And do you know now if she had another job to go to?
- C. **McCREA:** Yes, I do know that she ended up going to, I think, a call centre. But the only reason, you may be going to come onto this, but the only reason I know is because there were messages posted, I think on Facebook, that stipulated that that's where she'd gone to. And just for ... I don't know if you're going to come onto this Commissioner ... just for the record ... I needed to explain this to payroll that this is because I had no letter of resignation or whatever.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Now is there anything you wish to ... any of your answers you wish to add to or change in any way?
- E. **McCREA:** No.
- COMMISSIONER:** Do you have any complaints to make about the way you've been treated here today?
- F. **McCREA:** No I don't. I'd just like to say that it's been a very long process but a very complicated one and I don't know if this is appropriate or not but I do feel that you've asked me very probing questions in the right manner and I've done my best to answer them.
- COMMISSIONER:** Well thank you for coming today. The time is now 14:40.
- G. **McCREA:** Just before we close it. Just ... this may be ... I just want to introduce the evidence to you for ... it's not serious or whatever but you asked me about Neil McNickle and I just wanted to point out that this is photographs of me with Neil McNickle on 8<sup>th</sup> April which is a matter of weeks before the email that you gave me and there is a series of tweets ... Mr McNickle was particularly upset about the re-
- H.

A. designation issue and you'll see that he published quite a lot of articles about saying that I must resign and leave really. So I'm just pointing that out as part of ... I didn't know what you were going to ask me. That is the relationship that I have with Neil McNickle and I'll just leave you that as a little photograph of the team because one of things that came out from Mr McNickle's emails that I hadn't seen before of course, is the amount of working between the various groupings that have made complaints and you know, the issue about making complaints to Care Call whatever. I'm just putting on record that I was astonished that the process would have been carried out in such a way.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, so as we can find it later, we'll mark this document DB36 which is the next number.

**McCREA:** I wasn't sure what you were going to ask. I just thought I would bring some information, so apart from that, that's me finished.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. Well the time is now 14:45 and we'll terminate.

E. **[Ends]**

F.

G.

H.



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Annette Holden

**Date:** 18 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Annette Holden

**Time Started:** 13.56 pm

**Time Ended:** 14.27 pm

A. DB: As you'll see, this is being tape recorded. Thank you for coming. I'll just do the formal bit first. This is the interview of Annette Holden, taking place in 283 Parliament Buildings. Here present are Douglas Bain, the Commissioner for Standards, [REDACTED], as notetaker, and —

AH: Annette Holden present.

DB: Thank you. The time is now 1.56 pm. As you know, this interview will be taken on oath like all others in this investigation. Are you content to take an oath on the Bible?

AH: Yes, I am.

B. DB: OK. Will you take the Bible in your right hand please and read the words on the oath?

AH: I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

DB: Thank you very much. Now, can I just also for formalities confirm that you've received from me a note outlining the procedure and drawing your attention to these offences in relation to the investigation?

C. AH: Yes, I have.

DB: And, do you have any questions on that?

AH: No.

DB: Now — excuse me — thank you for coming to help me with my work on these complaints. As you know, Mr McCallister had made a complaint, which we will be dealing with principally, but there are a couple of other complaints as well. Can I just try and make sure I am understanding the background to this correctly? That you've been employed by Mr McCallister as a research officer and legal adviser since 2007.



A. AH: That's correct. July 2007

DB: OK. And, am I right in thinking that until about October of 2008, you worked almost exclusively at Stormont?

AH: Predominantly, yes.

DB: And then you moved to Newcastle, was it?

AH: Yes.

B. DB: And since you moved to Newcastle in October 2008, how often would you be in Stormont?

AH: Erm, I would have been in frequently — fairly frequently, because we were putting the Caravans Bill through at the time, and I was heavily involved in that. Thereafter, maybe once or twice a week, depending on the commitments of a Monday or a Tuesday. Then, there was a period where I wasn't up here, because I was left to run the constituency office on my own. So, I had to focus on any Assembly work I was doing from the constituency office and also looking after the constituency as well.

C. DB: Well, if I can take you to the period from let's say mid 2012 through till mid 2013.

AH: Oh, I would've been up once or twice a week.

DB: And would that be for the whole day or just popping in to do whatever you needed to do?

AH: No, because of where I live and where the constituency office is, it didn't make sense. It was more productive to spend the whole day.

DB: OK. So, if you come here, you're here for the day.

AH: Yes, yeah.

A. DB: And I suppose on constituency work, you can do it from either end.

AH: Yes.

DB: Or most of it. Then, when you were at Stormont, which room did you work in at that time?

AH: Originally? From 2007?

DB: No, from 2012/2013.

AH: Oh, crikey. I can't remember the room number.

B. DB: Was it Mr McCallister's room?

AH: It was in John McCallister's, yes.

DB: And am I right in thinking that at that time Mr McCrea's room was next door?

AH: No, erm. When John left the party, erm, he had — I think it was actually after the last. No, I tell a lie, I'm sorry; it was after the 2011 election that John's room was moved from the adjoining one to Basil's. Erm, he was chief whip at the time, so he was downstairs.

C. DB: Of course.

AH: Then, when he obviously left the party, lost the whip, he was moved upstairs into a little corner room. I think — sorry, I can't remember the numbers. So, the UUP end was sort of like further down the corridor a bit. Basil still stayed in his room.

DB: So, was there a period when they were in adjoining rooms?

AH: Yes, there was. From John's election in 2007 —

DB: Until — until John became chief whip.

A. AH: Yes, that would be correct. Yeah.

DB: And, as legal adviser, I imagine you assisted John in preparing his complaint to me.

AH: Yes, I did.

DB: And did you largely draft it?

AH: With guidance from John, because he'd obviously met with Miss Murray. I wasn't party to what was said to him over that. So, yes.

DB: And based on what he told you, you put it together.

B. AH: Yes.

DB: OK. And then, in relation to the Carecall investigation, if that's the right word for it, what was your role in relation to that?

AH: None, other than willing participant.

DB: Did you have a role then in trying, because Carecall never presented a report — at least, not yet, as I understand it —

C. AH: I believe they did and presented it to Mr McCrea.

DB: Right, well. Did you — well, let's just explore that. You gave an interview to them.

AH: Yes

DB: And your thinking was that you could be given a draft of the note of interview, and if you agreed it you would be asked to sign it.

AH: Yes, that's correct.

A. DB: And only the signed version would go in any report.

AH: Yes.

DB: Well, did you ever sign a version?

AH: No, never.

DB: Did you have any role on behalf of Mr McCrea of trying to get copies of the various notes of interview that people had received?

AH: Did I have any role, sorry?

B. DB: Yes, at the behest of Mr McCallister.

AH: Oh, Mr McCallister. Sorry, I thought you said Mr McCrea.

DB: Sorry, I probably did.

AH: Yes, I did, because I think when the Carecall investigation failed to be completed, people felt let down, understandably. John then said, "If you want these to be investigated, we're going to have to take this to the Commissioner"; yourself.

DB: Yes.

C. AH: So, you are — he said this to all of us, everybody who participated, "You need to get your Carecall statements. Ask for them back and then submit your complaint individually to the Commissioner." I think throughout the two or three months from May, June, July time, it was a very, very stressful time. It was an awful time; I can't begin to tell you how dreadful it was. It became apparent that some people were not either in an emotional fit enough emotional state to be able to have the competence to do it. So, John said that he would take it on, and he asked people to send him these Carecall statements or send them to me and that I would collate them for him to prepare the complaint to yourself.

A. DB: OK. I can understand that. And did you receive a copy of the note of interview of Karen Tabahe?

AH: No, I didn't. No.

DB: Or Ashleigh Murray?

AH: No, I don't think I did. No. Not a Carecall statement, no.

DB: Did you not wonder why that was?

B. AH: I did. I think I specifically asked Ashleigh, and she said that she was taking advice from her solicitor, and I think her solicitor was dealing with her element of the complaint.

With regard to Karen, I would think it's because she — I'd spoken to her afterwards. If I could maybe go back a stage, we met when we were giving on the Friday that we were giving the statements, cause she took me to one side, and she said, "Look. Just to let you know, I've told Carecall absolutely everything. I hope you don't mind." I think she said, "I haven't given your name, but I've explained, you know, there's sort of like a hierarchy of people that she's confided in.

C. When you speak to them, if you tell them everything, it will be become apparent to them who these people are." And I said, "Well, that's fine, you know, I'm just I'm going in to speak on your behalf, Karen, and all I can say is everything that you've said to me that I've experienced through you." So, she also said, "I'm also in a good place." No, sorry, that wasn't — that was December time. So, she said, "You just tell them everything", which is what I did. And then, when it became apparent that the Carecall statement was going nowhere, the report was going nowhere, we sort of lost touch with Karen. I think I did — I think I phoned her or sent her a message — I honestly can't remember exactly what communication method it was. And it was obvious that she was not going to pursue it, and I said, "Well, I feel I have a duty to pursue this on your behalf because of what I had to deal with in the aftermath of seeing you in such a terrible state." I mean she was, she was shattered; she was emotionally broken. And I said, "I can't sit back and let this go by unchecked.

- A. I didn't have any power to deal with it when you first came to me, because I wasn't your line manager, you worked for Basil McCrea. He can't be allowed to get away with treating his staff like this."

DB: Now, we'll just come to that in just a moment if we can. I think you'd known Karen since 2007.

AH: No, I think it was 2008. Whenever she first —

DB: 2008?.

- B. AH: Yeah, whenever she first started working for Basil.

DB: OK. And my understanding is that in the first few years there were no issues at all that you were aware of between her and Basil.

AH: First few months, I was certainly — no. I mean I knew that he'd destroyed [REDACTED] who worked for him, because I think she was working for him — she was working for him when I first started working for John, and I knew that she'd gone off on the sick and she was actually taking him to tribunal so I knew that he didn't have a great way with his staff. But, certainly, from Karen's perspective, she was always — I mean, she loved her job, she just. She was nervous at first because she didn't know what she was doing: she was thrust into it, so she came to me for help and guidance, which I willingly gave, and she soon settled into her role,

- C. DB: Now, just because this is being recorded, can we just clear up when you say you knew Mr McCrea, I think your words were, "destroyed [REDACTED]".

AH: Yeah.

DB: Do you know that from your own knowledge, or is that what you heard or surmised? Did you see or hear things yourself?

AH: I, well yeah, I'd heard him shouting at her, and I'd heard unpleasantness in the office next door, and I remember saying to John once that [REDACTED] her name was, "Doesn't [REDACTED] — you know I haven't seen [REDACTED] appear for some time, what's" —

**A.**      **DB:** And was her industrial tribunal case successful?

**AH:** I don't know: I don't know the outcome.

**DB:** So, really, you don't really know whether Mr McCrea was at fault or she was at fault or —

**AH:** No, no. No, I don't.

**DB:** Now, then coming to, would it be fair to say that the first you were aware of issues between Karen and Mr McCrea was in late 2012?

**B.**      **AH:** Probably about then, yeah.

**DB:** And, by that time, you were working predominantly in Newcastle, though you were here for a couple of days a week.

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** And, she confided in you what was going on about Mr McCrea's conduct towards her.

**AH:** She did. She would come into my office in tears.

**C.**      **DB:** Yeah. And, I think you gave her certain advice.

**AH:** I did.

**DB:** And, you made her aware of the grievance procedures.

**AH:** Ahem.

**DB:** And also of her employment law rights.

**AH:** I did, yes.

**A. DB:** And she, no doubt, was thankful for that but didn't wish to pursue these at that time.

**AH:** No, because she was terrified of losing her job. I mean, all she ever used to say was how much she loved the job, how she loved being up here. She was just — she absolutely loved her job. I mean, it was a standing joke, you know, that, "Oh I love my job, I love my job." She's also a very religious person; she's deeply religious and wouldn't want to cause problems for anybody either.

**DB:** And then, she continued to give you information about what was happening.

**B. AH:** Yeah.

**DB:** What did you actually see or hear yourself as opposed to what she or others told you?

**AH:** I personally didn't see anything. I didn't see anything; it's just from Karen coming into my office physically shaking uncontrollably, unable to speak, phonecalls, the things that she said. She would just, it was "That man. He shouldn't talk to me like that. He shouldn't be allowed to speak to me like that." I think she — Karen went from being, she's a very bubbly person, she's a very vibrant person, she describes herself as "a people person", she loves the contact with people, you can't help but warm to her. And she went from being this lovely, wonderful, bubbly person to being a wreck.

**C. DB:** But you — I mean, you put that down to Mr McCrea cause that's what she told you, and you don't — you've no reason to disbelieve her.

**AH:** I've no reason to disbelieve it, no. I don't see why she would lie about it.

**DB:** But, it might be for some other reason altogether. Or, it might be an irrational reaction to what Mr McCrea was doing. You simply don't know.

**AH:** No, I know I can't say with any certainty, because I didn't witness. Karen doesn't lie. Karen could not lie if her life depended on it. That is the nature of the individual.



A. DB: That is your opinion and that is helpful, but of course when it comes to who is telling the truth that isn't a decision for me.

AH: Yes, indeed.

DB: And then I think Karen was off sick with a sick line for stress in April of 2013.

AH: I think it was about then, yes. Roundabout Easter time.

DB: And that was a time when, if I've got this chronology correct, both Basil and John had resigned from the UUP but NI21 hadn't yet been formed.

B. AH: No, it hadn't, no.

DB: But they were —

AH: It was busy behind the scenes, yeah.

DB: And that must've been a very stressful time for everyone.

AH: Yes, it was, yeah.

DB: And was there a sort of a, before the public announcement of the formation, was there an event at the La Mon Hotel?

C. AH: There were a couple. There was one that I was actually present at, em, and then there was a brainstorming weekend that I didn't go to — I couldn't because of personal commitments. I think, and I'm speaking with my compass based on the knowledge of my conversations with John about this, because we were completely kept in the dark. John was getting very frustrated because Basil had said, "You know, we need this brainstorming session this weekend, we need this, we need that" but nothing was happening, and every time John tried to get things in place to make it happen Basil stopped it. And it was getting so, I think maybe even a week — less than a week before the event was supposed to take place, nothing was still in place, so John, it was a Friday afternoon, and John said, "Right. Enough is enough. He wants this to happen. I'm taking control." And he started delegating to myself and Kathy about organising this, and he rang Basil to try and to say, "Right, Basil.

**A.** You know, you've procrastinated long enough, so I've taken responsibility here. If you want this to happen." Basil threw the head up, and he then threw it all at Karen. Karen then rang me, because within the space of half an hour, between myself and Kathy, we'd more or less organised. He'd obviously then — Basil had then thrown this back at Karen. Karen was on the phone to me, and I said, "Right, Karen. This is what we've achieved so far. These are the", and I gave her whatever information it was she needed to help her, and I said, "Don't feel you've got to take this on your own. Give us a call if we can help you." And she was in bits. She was absolutely — and he'd bawled her out, because she told me, and I think this might have been the episode that John witnessed, because I remember John telling me about the incident — he witnessed it. Either before or after he'd told me, Karen had actually rung me in tears —

**B.** **DB:** But again, just to cut short, you're relying on what other people have told you; you have no direct knowledge of —

**AH:** No; no I have not. And I said this at the very start of Carecall: I have not physically witnessed any of the behaviour that I have reported, but I have no reason to believe it to be false.

**DB:** But, in any event, as a result of that, er, surrounding the event at La Mon, you spoke to Karen again and again reminded her of her rights. Is that right?

**C.** **AH:** Throughout, whenever she would phone me in tears and whenever she would say she can't go on, whenever she would say that she really doesn't want to have to leave but it looks like she's going to have to go, because she'd been marginalised, her job role had been redefined, erm, without any conference with her. Erm, all of these things were contributing to her. She said — she actually said to me that she felt so undervalued and so belittled by her treatment, and that's when I said, "Look, you know, enough is enough, Karen. You have to do something about this. If it's happening, these are your rights, this is where you can go, this is what you can do and I will support you if you want me to, but please do not sit back and take it", because I could see how her mental health was deteriorating.

**DB:** And then, I think after she'd been off over the period attributed to stress, her work, place of work was changed.

A. AH: Yes.

DB: And I am not entirely clear: was that to Dromore or Lisburn?

AH: Ah, to be honest, ah, I really can't remember exactly. It was a very stressful time for me personally at that time. On top of, I was dealing with things at home, I was having to deal with this stuff at work, erm, I was also on the executive and having to try to deal with that. I know at some of the executive meetings that [REDACTED] [REDACTED], the then party chair, had talked about getting Karen — basically that she wanted rid of Karen, full stop, because she was trying to sort out — it had nothing to do with her party finances, but she was getting involved in the staffing, erm, and she was trying to send people here, there and everywhere. I think she might've been down to go to Dromore. I don't know if she was able to successfully argue her case for not going there. I know she was farmed out to Lisburn —

B. DB: OK

AH: — for a while. I, I'm confused about the specifics there.

DB: OK. Now, but in any event, she no longer worked at, at Stormont.

AH: Yeah; yeah, she was no longer Basil's PA.

DB: And again, as a result of that, did you again remind her of her rights?

C. AH: I'm sure I did, yes.

DB: And, really, Karen's position throughout this is that, although she'd been advised very helpfully by you of her rights, both under the grievance procedure and under employment law, she took a decision for whatever reason she may have had not to pursue these.

AH: I would say yes, until December, um, December last year, when she actually came up to me — excuse me, sorry — and she said to me, you know, "I've thought long and hard. I have done what you've advised me all along, I've kept this diary" — cause I think she even brought the diary to Carecall — um, "I'm in a good place now."

- A.** And those were the exact words that she used: "I'm in a good place now. Will you help me to, to put in a formal complaint?" And I said, "Yes, of course I will, if that's what you want to do." Erm, and she said, "Right". This, this would've been on roundabout 13<sup>th</sup> of December I think. She said, "I'll give you a call over the Christmas period. We'll meet up and we'll see, see where we go from there. And then, as I —

**DB:** She was [REDACTED]

**AH:** [REDACTED]

- B.** **DB:** And, in fact, she never came back to you for advice, er, on how to pursue an industrial tribunal or a grievance.

**AH:** No. No, well she was off sick for some time after.

**DB:** You see what I am just struggling with a little bit, if it is the case that Karen has made clear to me that she does not make any complaint against Mr McCrea and she hasn't exercised her right to go to an industrial tribunal, why you consider it appropriate for you to raise these matters on her behalf if she's made very clear that she doesn't want to pursue them.

- C.** **AH:** Well, I — I would disagree with the fact that she's made it very clear she doesn't. She hasn't said otherwise.

**DB:** Well if — if — she has made it very clear to me.

**AH:** Oh, if she has. Well, I don't know. I don't know if that's the case.

**DB:** No, but if she has, would you think it appropriate for you to take these forward, although she has said she doesn't wish to?

**AH:** Probably not, when you put it like that. But I — that's with hindsight, that's with knowledge —

**DB:** Oh, of course; it's not a criticism.

**A.**     **AH:** — that I don't have, so you know. I'm acting in her best interests, because I genuinely didn't think that she was mentally and emotionally strong enough to do this. And I have — I did tell her. I spoke to her and said, as a matter of courtesy, "Karen, I'm doing this. If you want me to stop, if you don't want me to do it, tell me." She didn't tell me otherwise. Erm, and I said, "I just do not know how — you know, you must be a very, very strong person or very strong beliefs to be able to be back where you are now, knowing what I know how you've been treated." So, she did know: you know, I have not don't this without her knowledge.

**DB:** Oh, no, no, no, no, no, I'm not suggesting that, and there is no criticism at all intended of you at all. I just want to —

**B.**     **AH:** No, it's a fair — it's a fair point you are making.

**DB:** It would be unusual, thinking of an industrial tribunal case situation, and you're an expert on this — it is not an area of law that I have ever dealt in — but it would be unusual wouldn't it for someone to complain about conduct towards another member of staff when that other member of staff isn't making any complaint?

**AH:** It's, well, it's unusual, but it's not unheard of.

**DB:** But if that other member of staff made clear that they had no complaint —

**C.**     **AH:** Well, if they then make clear that there is no complaint —

**DB:** — it would never get off the ground.

**AH:** Well, exactly.

**DB:** Now, just one or two more things, I think. You obviously work very closely with John McCallister.

**AH:** Yes.

A. DB: So, was he aware of what, er, of what relations were apparently like between Basil and Karen?

AH: I would say not. He would have no cause.

DB: You didn't discuss it with him.

AH: She'd specifically asked me not to.

DB: Right. Other than this, er, incident that you've mentioned that, er —

B. AH: Which he personally witnessed, yeah. Because he, he told me he was absolutely appalled: he had to go back and speak to Basil, and he, he made a point of speaking to Karen to make sure that she was alright. And I think other staff members witnessed it as well who were left reeling.

DB: And just to be clear, that incident, while you can't be precise about the date, was, er, surrounding the arrangements for an NI21 brainstorming event.

AH: It wouldn't have been an NI21 per se, because the party wasn't in existence, but yes, yes it was, yes.

C. DB: But it wasn't a UUP event.

AH: No; no, it wasn't.

DB: Indeed, at that time, well they'd both resigned from the UUP, hadn't they?

AH: Yes, John resigned first; Valentine's Day on 'The View'. And, er, then Basil went the next day.

DB: But this, this was an event about, er, setting up the party and what it was going to do.

AH: Yes, it was.

**A.** **DB:** And nothing to do with Mr McCallister and Mr McCrea's role as an MLA. Wasn't a constituency matter or with constituents; it was all about the party.

**AH:** Well, it was about party policies. Erm, but I mean, the staff involved are still the respective staff of the MLAs: they're not the, they're not party staff, they're still MLA staff.

**DB:** Yeah. That's right. Now that, er, that's everything I'd like your assistance on. Before we terminate the interview, is there anything you wish to ask me or to clarify or?

**AH:** No, I don't think so. No, I can't think of anything. Thank you.

**B.** **DB:** OK, now.

**AH:** I'm sure I'll think of a thousand things when I leave.

**DB:** Indeed, I may do the same, though I think it unlikely but I have a number of witnesses to see and as a result of what they say they may raise something that I haven't put to you that you may be able to help me on. So, I might have to come back to you, but I think that unlikely.

**AH:** OK.

**DB:** Now, the time is now 2.27 pm, and we're concluding the interview. Thank you very much.

**AH:** Thank you very much. Thank you.





## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (2)

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Annette Holden

**Date:** 27 January 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Annette Holden

**Time Started:** 10.28 am

**Time Ended:** 10.58 am

- A. **DB:** OK. The time is 10.28 on 27 January 2015, and this is a second interview with Annette Holden. As you'll see, Annette, we are recording again, and can I remind you that you're still on oath.

There is one preliminary matter. At the first interview, at page 10, letter A, the transcript records you as saying you had never signed a copy of your Carecall interview note, but I understand that, on reflection, your position is that you did sign a handwritten copy — a handwritten note taken at the time —

**AH:** Yes, I did.

**DB:** — but you never signed a transcript.

- B. **AH:** I never signed a transcript. No. On the day of the interview — the Friday; it was the Friday of the election — I gave my interview to Carecall. There was somebody taking notes. It wasn't formally recorded on a voice recorder. I was given the handwritten notes there and then to sign. But I do believe I was told that I would receive a final copy to verify, which didn't happen. So, apologies for confusion.

**DB:** No, it's just it gets it cleared up for the record.

Now, can I ask you about your involvement in NI21 finances?

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** What was your role in relation to that?

- C. **AH:** De facto treasurer, I suppose. John McCallister was the nominated treasurer. He was the recorded treasurer with the Electoral Commission. He obviously oversaw the finances, but I did the day-to-day management of them and presented everything to him for signing when it came to submitting the returns to the Electoral Commission.

**DB:** So, would that include, for example, scrutinising invoices?

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** Preparing cheques for signature?

**AH:** Yes, it would; all of those. Making sure that nobody — or trying to make sure that people didn't spend money that we didn't have, which was completely ignored. Trying to make sure that creditors got paid and got paid on time. The routine management of the finances.

- A. DB: Now, can I just ask you to look at a number of documents, really as examples of this, but they have other significance? Can I show you document BM24? Is that a statement, an invoice, from La Mon Hotel, and I think the invoice is attached to it?

AH: Yes. Yes.

DB: But does the statement say that the invoice was sent to Mrs Annette?

AH: I'm presuming that's me, yes.

DB: That's you.

AH: Yes.

DB: And if you look at the invoice attached on the back, does it show that the address to which it was sent was 29a The Promenade, Newcastle?

- B. AH: Yes. That's John's constituency office.

DB: And then could I ask you to look at another document, which is a transcript of emails? Is that an email exchange between you and Kirsty McClay?

AH: Yes. Yes.

DB: And Kirsty was one of Mr McCrea's staff, is that right?

AH: Yes. She's his PA. Yeah.

DB: And that, again, is about the NI21 conference at the Europa in November 2013.

AH: I'm presuming so. To be honest, off the top of my head, without making reference to documents, I couldn't tell you exactly, but it would make sense, with it being pop-ups and banners and things, yeah.

- C. DB: And it's saying that you had written a cheque, but I assume that's an NI21 cheque.

AH: Yes. It's just the terminology.

DB: And then BM26 is another email exchange with Kirsty in which you say, "*I'm in the process of sorting out the party finances*", and asking what a particular invoice was for.

AH: Yes.

DB: And she replies that it was for the sound and cameras and other things at the conference.

A. AH: Yes.

DB: Then can I ask you to look at BM27? Is that a further email exchange with Kirsty McClay, where you are asking about a donation of £5,000?

AH: Yes. It is.

DB: And that was a donation from [REDACTED], which was [REDACTED] is that right?

AH: I'm not sure that was [REDACTED]. I think that the £5,000 was [REDACTED].

DB: Oh.

AH: I, I have, em, I kept a record of any donations that I was made aware of. The difficulty that I had — and I kept stressing this at every single executive meeting — was, even though some donations are not necessarily reportable to the commission, you still have to record them, and I kept asking for names of donations.

B. You know, even if somebody provides a paperclip free, I need to know.

DB: I just wonder can that be right because you see the reply.

AH: With [REDACTED] donation.

DB: And you've acknowledged that.

AH: I, I, honestly, I don't know. I would have to check a copy of the records.

DB: Well, I mean, if it had not been [REDACTED] you would've been in touch, wouldn't you, to say, "No that's not right; it's not [REDACTED]"?

C. AH: Not necessarily, no, because I had no idea what was going on. I know that we received a cheque for £5,000 from [REDACTED]. I know that there was a disagreement when that £5,000 was discussed because [REDACTED] was saying that it was given to her specifically to stand as the Euro candidate, which could not have been true because, at that stage, we didn't even know if we were going to be putting up a Euro candidate, who that Euro candidate would be. [REDACTED]. I'm almost certain, gave £5,000. I think [REDACTED] gave two donations. One was £1,000 that was, I think, specifically for Connor Clements to develop an iPhone app — the NI21 app — and I think the other donation was for £2,000 or £3,000.

I'm sure the £5,000 is [REDACTED]. I could be mistaken but I would need to check the record of the donations that I've got on my computer in the office. There's no intention to mislead or anything here.

- A.** The difficulty I have is it's very, very vague because nobody was telling John or me anything with regard to what was going on with party finances. And we kept sending out emails. We kept stressing at executive meetings that "we don't have the money in; you can't spend this, stop ordering things". I sent an email around under John's instructions, saying, "From the party treasurer: don't even order so much as a ballpoint pen". Or something along those lines, you know, to that level of detail, because we do not have the money and we need to know what is coming in and where it's going to.

So I apologise for the vagueness, but it was nigh-on impossible trying to coordinate and look after the finances.

**DB:** You see, I just find it rather surprising that, if Kirsty refers to [REDACTED], if that's incorrect, you don't respond and say, "No, it's nothing to do with [REDACTED]".

- B.** **AH:** We may well have had a phone conversation about the two. It's quite possible we had a phone conversation, discussing both donations. I'm sure that £5,000 is [REDACTED], and if I'm wrong — I will check when I go back to the office — and if I'm wrong, I will come back and clarify that.

**DB:** But, in any event, it'll be shown in the return to the Electoral Commission.

**AH:** Yes, it —

**DB:** Who it was from.

**AH:** Yes, it should be, yeah.

**DB:** Because it's well above the specified amount, isn't it.

**AH:** Yes. Well, yeah, I mean I can't remember off the top of my head what they are, but yes.

- C.** **DB:** And so, although John McCallister was the treasurer, de facto, you were running the finances.

**AH:** I had the chequebook and I was trying to make sure people were paid.

**DB:** And you were issuing the instructions to staff.

**AH:** Only from John.

**DB:** Yeah, but you didn't clear every single one with him. You told them to send you invoices and so on.

**AH:** They were told. John told them to send me invoices, and I kept reminding them. John, ultimately, was the treasurer. He had the responsibility at the end of the day for the finances.

**A. DB:** Oh yes, but, on a day-to-day basis, that was delegated to you.

**AH:** Well, I was coordinating invoices. I was trying to make sure that people were getting paid and I was trying to make sure that the account didn't go in the red.

**DB:** And you said that finance was a problem at that time because there wasn't enough money.

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** Was — there is a scheme from the Assembly, isn't there, a FAPP scheme.

**AH:** Yes, there is, yeah.

**B. DB:** And did NI21 avail of that?

**AH:** Yes. The FAPP pays for the running of the party office, I believe. It pays for the consumables, office consumables, party staff that sort of thing.

**DB:** And there are very strict rules, aren't there, about what it can be used for?

**AH:** I believe so, yes. I mean, that's not my domain.

**DB:** I mean, you know so, don't you?

**AH:** It's not something I'm completely — I'm presuming it's the same as OCE.

**C. DB:** Right. And you know that there are very strict rules for OCE.

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** Could I ask you to look at BM14 and BM15? Are these invitations and a covering letter from Mr McCrea regarding the NI21 party conference at the Europa on 16 November?

**AH:** Yes, they are, yeah.

**DB:** And can I show you, while you have these in front of you, BM13? Is that an invoice for 500 letters and 1,500 invitations?

**AH:** Yes, aha, yes.

**DB:** And that's for the party conference.

**AH:** Yes, it would be, yeah.

- A. **DB:** And can I ask you, I think, just so as it's clear: the plan was to send out three invitations —
- AH:** I've no idea.
- DB:** — with each letter?
- AH:** I've no idea. I wasn't involved in that. I'm sorry.
- DB:** Well, I think if you look at the specimen letter towards the end, it makes clear that there are two extra invoices — I mean two extra invitations included for anyone else the recipient wanted to invite. It says that, doesn't it?
- AH:** Possibly.
- DB:** Well, it's not a question of "possibly".
- B. **AH:** Well, I mean, you are asking me to try and remember something from —
- DB:** No, I am asking you to look at the letter and see if that's what it says.
- AH:** Do you want to point it out to me?
- DB:** I think the second —
- AH:** Oh right, yeah, sorry, yeah: 'guest pass and two additional guest passes for your friends and family.' Yes, yes, it does; it says that.
- DB:** And how were these letters to be sent out? By hand or post?
- AH:** I've no idea. I wasn't involved in it.
- DB:** You'd no involvement in that at all, is that right?
- C. **AH:** Not that I can recall, no. I had no involvement in the planning of it. I seem to recall there was a discussion about it being paid for through OCE, and I said that it can't be paid for through OCE. I think we were going to frank some but it never happened. I wasn't involved in the planning of it, the detail of it. I have no idea. I'm sorry.
- DB:** OK. Well perhaps we can just explore that a little bit. Could I ask you to look at two further documents: BM16 and BM17? Again, other exchanges with Kirsty McClay about stamps for the party conference, and I —
- AH:** Yes, it is, yeah.
- DB:** Which she bought them, at a cost of £41.50, and you reimbursed her with a cheque out of drawing on the NI21 account.
- AH:** Yes. Yes, that's right.



- A. DB: So, in the end, they were sent out and paid for out of party funds.  
AH: Yes.  
DB: The stamps.  
AH: Yes.  
DB: And I will show you BM18. Is that an invoice for envelopes?  
AH: Yes.  
DB: 500 envelopes?  
AH: Yes.
- B. DB: Which matches the 500 letters.  
AH: Yes, it would, yes.  
DB: And, again, that was paid for out of party funds.  
AH: I don't recall seeing this invoice. That's not to say I haven't, but I don't remember seeing it. I can check with — I still have a copy of the list of invoices that I dealt with, but £14.99 doesn't ring a bell. I could be mistaken.  
DB: It's an address. It's invoiced to NI21.  
AH: But it's invoiced to Basil McCrea's constituency office, not John's.  
DB: Then can I ask you to look at a transcript of an email, BM10?
- C. AH: Yes. Yes.  
DB: Now perhaps you could explain that to me because it appears to me that you're saying that the party doesn't have sufficient funds to cover the cost of sending out the invitations.  
AH: We —  
DB: And that you are going to pay it out of OCA.  
AH: We didn't have it at the time, but, at the end of the day, it didn't get paid out of OCA.  
DB: No, but your intention there was that you were going to pay it out of OCA.  
AH: Because that's what John had directed.



- A. DB:** But you knew that was quite improper. You just told me that you knew, you were well aware of the rules of OCA, and you couldn't use OCA, could you, for something that was an entirely party matter?

**AH:** Possibly not, no, but — No, OK —

**DB:** Well, it's not a question of "possibly not"; you knew —

**AH:** No, that's fine, and, yes, you're right, but I was acting under instructions from John.

**DB:** But you were acting under instructions to do something that you knew was contrary to the Assembly rules.

- B. AH:** Yes, yes, I have to admit that, but under instruction from John, and I'm a little bit confused as to why I'm being put on trial here for something that is about sexual indiscretions from an elected Member, and we're being called into question over this. I'm a little bit concerned about that, Mr Bain, I have to say.

**DB:** Well, I have a duty to investigate any allegations that the code of conduct has been breached, but also any other matters of impropriety that come to my attention, and —

**AH:** Well, I've given you the answer.

**DB:** And did you explain to Mr McCallister, when he gave you this improper instruction, that it was quite unlawful for him to use OCA for that purpose?

- C. AH:** I expressed my dissatisfaction with it, yes.

**DB:** Did you tell him it was unlawful?

**AH:** I didn't need to tell him it was unlawful. He's very familiar.

**DB:** And yet, despite that, he insisted in his instruction —

**AH:** You'll have to take that — Well, yes, what am I supposed to do? He's my employer.

**DB:** No, but he didn't say, "Oh, thanks for telling me. I realise we can't do that. We'll have to find another way". He said, "Carry on and do it, although I know it's unlawful".

**AH:** I cannot remember the exact nature of the conversation. I'd be lying if I was to say otherwise.

A. DB: OK. But, in any event, OCA wasn't used.

AH: No, it wasn't. No.

DB: In fact, in the email we have been referring to in BM10, you instructed Ashleigh Murray to prepare address labels for the letters, to go on the envelopes for the letters.

AH: Yes.

DB: And then she asks can she get them from the Assembly stationery store.

AH: Possibly, yeah. I think we had some. I said we've got some.

DB: Can I ask you to look at BM11, which, as you'll see, is an Assembly —

B. AH: Envelope.

DB: First-class envelope.

AH: Yes.

DB: And an address has been written on it but it has been covered over by, with a label so that it can be reused.

AH: Yeah.

DB: Do you recognise the handwriting that you can see under the label?

AH: No. No, I'm sorry, I don't.

C. DB: Are you familiar with Ashleigh Murray's handwriting?

AH: No, I wouldn't be, no.

DB: OK. I understand that that was one of a very large number of envelopes in the same hand that were recovered from Ashleigh's workplace after she left.

AH: That's as maybe. I couldn't comment. I know nothing about it.

DB: But did you ever instruct her to write envelopes to send out the invitations?

AH: If I had've done, it wouldn't have been on Assembly envelopes. It would've been on plain white.

DB: And did she ever say to you, "I've written out the envelopes"?

**A. AH:** I honestly can't remember.

**DB:** Well, if she had, you wouldn't have had that discussion with her about address labels by email, by text, would you? If she'd already handwritten envelopes.

**AH:** I suppose in hindsight. I don't know. I mean, you're asking me to think about things that I had very little dealings with. I honestly can't remember.

**DB:** Did Ashleigh ever tell you that Mr McCrea had told her to write address labels for the envelopes — to write the envelopes?

**AH:** I can't remember. Honestly. I had so little to do with this, other than the bit about getting them out. How they were done, there was the discussion about whether we would frank them or not. The franking machine wasn't working. That really is my limited involvement with it.

**B. DB:** Well, other than going along with a plan, which you knew was contrary to the Assembly rules —

**AH:** Which didn't happen.

**DB:** Why was it that it didn't happen?

**AH:** I can't remember. I honestly do not know. I had so little to do with this. I genuinely had nothing to do with it, other than what we've discussed.

**DB:** Now, there's just one final matter. When we met on 16 November, you told me that you largely drafted the complaint based on information that Mr McCallister had given you.

**AH:** Yes.

**C. DB:** And one of the issues in the complaint is headed, "The taking and possession of voyeuristic photographs of a former female staff member, amounting to sexual harassment". Do you remember that?

**AH:** Yes, I do, yes.

**DB:** And that member of staff was Jacquelyn Neglia, wasn't it?

**AH:** Yes.

**DB:** I'm just interested in the choice of the word "voyeuristic". Was that something Mr McCallister said or was that a label you attached to it?

**AH:** It was, I believe, based on a conversation that Jacquelyn had had with John, when he told her how she'd felt on discovering them. That's my recollection of it.

- A. **DB:** Yeah, but that's not quite an answer to my question. Who was it came up with the word "voyeuristic"?

**AH:** I think it was Jacquelyn who said to John that it was bordering on voyeurism. That's how it made her feel. You'd have to — I didn't come up with it. It was relayed to me, either John coined the phrase or it was from his conversation with Jacquelyn. You'll need to take that up with John.

**DB:** It's not you that came up with it.

**AH:** No.

**DB:** Of course, the photographs that came with the complaint come nowhere near being voyeuristic, do they?

- B. **AH:** Well, it depends how you define voyeurism really. Voyeurism is being photographs taken or being observed without being aware.

**DB:** Well it's a lot more than that, isn't it, as you know, with your legal background?

**AH:** It depends on the context and how it makes you feel, I would argue.

**DB:** Well, wouldn't it be normal to use the word in the way it's defined in Northern Ireland law?

**AH:** Which is?

- C. **DB:** Well I'm sure you're familiar with the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order?

**AH:** I'm not, actually.

*"For the purposes of obtaining sexual gratification".* Well, taking photographs of somebody's bare legs and backside and photographing them without them being aware when they're quite scantily dressed.

**DB:** And I think if you read on, the person has to be doing a private act, which is a sexual act or using the toilet.

**AH:** Is a private act a sexual act?

**DB:** Yes, it's defined. Anyway, you were —

**AH:** I think that's splitting hairs, Mr Bain. I'm sorry; I really do.

**A. DB:** Well, you see, others might say it was deliberately using language in a very loose way to try and sling mud at people.

**AH:** Really, as opposed to investigating whether something serious has actually happened.

**DB:** Now, have you anything, on reflection, that you'd like to add?

**AH:** No, other than the fact that I am seriously concerned as to the validity of this investigation. It really seems to me that the concerns that have been raised, I'm not convinced are being taken seriously enough, Mr Bain, and I'm sorry; it saddens me to say that.

**B.** This, it goes to the whole heart of the matter here. You've got somebody who's perceived to be in a position of power, an MLA, who has allegedly conducted these acts against vulnerable females, vulnerable individuals, and it brings home to roost the fact that Ashleigh said, "Who would believe me? I couldn't say anything or do anything. Who would believe me?"

[REDACTED]

**C.**

[REDACTED]

**AH:** But in my —

**DB:** And then to assess whether or not that constituted a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.

**AH:** It's —

**DB:** And to do that, I will carry out, as I am required to do by the General Procedures Direction, a full and thorough investigation, and that means questioning the credibility of witnesses where I think that's appropriate.

- A. **AH:** I understand and I accept that you've got to question the credibility of witnesses, but you say there that you want to get to the truth of the matter. It's your role to get to the truth. In my last interview with you, when I stated to you that Karen had said these things to me, she'd come to me in a terrible emotional and mental state, and you said, "But you didn't witness anything", and I said, "No, but I have no reason to disbelieve her. Karen wouldn't lie", and you said something along the lines of, "Well, that's your opinion and it's very helpful, but it's not for me to establish who's telling the truth".

Is it your position to establish who's telling the truth or not, Mr Bain?

**DB:** My remit is set out in legislation, which I'm sure you are familiar with. If you thought that was what I said, then I —

- B. **AH:** Well, it's recorded in the transcript, if you would like to turn to the page.

**DB:** I think, I think you're interpreting it in —

**AH:** I can't interpret —

**DB:** In a way that wasn't intended. I'm going to get to the bottom of this as best I can. That may mean people being asked questions that they find difficult. That, I'm afraid, is just the way it goes. I'm keen to progress this. I'm seeing a number of more witnesses, and, once I've done that, I will study everything they've said and reach a view.

- C. **AH:** I just think, I think it's appalling. I really think it's absolutely appalling that he's strutting around there like he's done no wrong.

**DB:** Well, I wouldn't want to prejudge the issue and I hope no one else would either.

Have you anything else you wish to say?

**AH:** No. Thank you. I've got that off my chest.

**DB:** OK. The time is now 10.58, and we'll conclude the interview. Thank you.

**AH:** Thank you very much.

Basil

DB 35







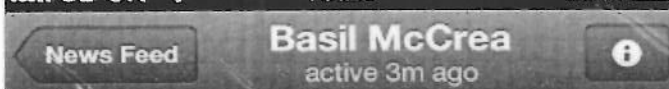


I know 😊 I need to have a chat with you about what is possible and what isn't. I don't have very much money. Politics is fun and exciting BUT not very well paid. We keep trying to do far too much with very little resource but working for me is a good way of improving your CV, your confidence, your contacts and finding the right career. I think you should aim higher than you currently are. There are some specific issues for you to look at for me and I think there are ways to get you paid for a while but the long term is always more vulnerable. I will talk to you about this when we meet. I am not being negative I just want to manage your expectations. I do think you are a great girl and I will do my very best to help you because you are really impressive. Hopefully you can help



BUT not very well paid. We keep trying to do far too much with very little resource but working for me is a good way of improving your CV, your confidence, your contacts and finding the right career. I think you should aim higher than you currently are. There are some specific issues for you to look at for me and I think there are ways to get you paid for a while but the long term is always more vulnerable. I will talk to you about this when we meet. I am not being negative I just want to manage your expectations. I do think you are a great girl and I will do my very best to help you because you are really impressive. Hopefully you can help me too because boy do I need help. Hope this post isn't too heavy. See you Monday. 😊 x

Sent from web



I agree!! 😊 Looking forward to seeing you Monday. We can have a good chat then. I take you are ok working for me?

Yea course I am! I'm not fully involved in politics atm but I keep a wee eye n agree n everything you say and believe! I should be asking you r u ok me working for u lol!



Don't worry about politics. We deal in real life issues. Important things that affect everybody and anybody. It is hard work but very rewarding. 😊 ps sometimes we do call it politics 😊



Send



Mr McCrea is very good at presenting a front of a honest hardworking family man who is out to protect the people of Northern Ireland, he presents himself with this #freshpolitics when in fact, you are not allowed to express your opinion, you have to work in silence in the office, if you dare cross him or disagree with what he says you are ignored, disrespected and finally pushed out.

During my time working with Mr McCrea I was his 'Travelling PA', 'Events Co-Ordinator' and 'Constituency Officer'. I would have many private conversations with Mr McCrea about his personal life in which he disclosed information such as he did not love his partner anymore and was only with her because she owned the house and it because it would look bad to the public, he told me about his ex wife and children in great detail. He explained to me that the people of Lisburn (his constituency) were no longer important. During these, and any other, conversations I was asked to switch my phone off as he thought I was recording our conversation. Mr McCrea lives in a world of paranoia, and rightly so, he knows he degrades everyone on a daily basis.

Mr McCrea should not ever be in a position of power, he abuses this power. He abuses the trust of the people working for him and he betrays the trust of the UK Government. He is an absolute disgrace and every member of parliament should be ashamed to work along side him.

I am aware a statement needs to be factual and I have given your examples and opinions on Mr McCrea, I will also supply any photographic or audio evidence I can to back this up, but here are the facts:

During this statement I will go in to further detail about the above allegations but for now I would like to outline some incidents that I deem extremely inappropriate from a man in his position.

Whilst working with Mr McCrea/NI21 these are a few examples of the mental/verbal/sexual/financial abuse incidents that I witnessed or was involved with:

- In my first initial correspondence with Mr. McCrea, when I was seeking out work, was through Facebook requesting employment. In the responses I received Mr. McCrea explained he had little money due to recently becoming an independent MLA and would not be able to pay me for a while. I agreed to come on board voluntary for a short term basis. This was in March 2013, I did not become a paid member of staff until August 2013. During my time in a voluntary capacity I worked more than full time hours doing various roles within the party. [REDACTED] organized for me to undertake an 'apprenticeship' programme with People First. This involved Mr McCrea paying £30 per week and People First paying £150. Totally £180 a week. During my time working voluntary I approached Mr McCrea and explained I was struggling to pay my bills because I was working so much. It was made clear to me that if my dedication to my work



waivered then I would suffer. I understood this to mean I would be treated with the typical 'Basil Behavior' as others, such as, shouting at you, disrespecting you in front of other people and staff, giving you meaningless tasks to perform, or blatantly ignoring you.

Please see photos attached for evidence of conversation between myself and Mr McCrea that on the day of my departure I discovered Mr McCrea had deleted his messages to me but kept my messages to him.

- One night while working late, alone. Mr McCrea and I were talking about the Princes Trust. When discussing this Mr McCrea referred to the young people, including myself, as 'damaged', as we would come from disadvantaged backgrounds. I expressed my disgust at this but it was shrugged off like it did not matter.
- Mr McCrea asked me to accompany him to a dinner meeting as part of my job role with a woman called [REDACTED]. During dinner Mr McCrea consumed two glasses of red wine. After dinner we left the Mac in Belfast St Annes Cathedral and headed towards shawsbridge to drop me home. While driving past the house of sport round about Mr McCrea started to rub my leg, this continued. Whilst doing this he crossed the white lines several times and unbeknown to him the police were following us. The police continued to follow and pulled Mr McCrea in at [REDACTED] car park. The police asked Mr McCrea if had been drinking, to this Mr McCrea lied and stated no he had not. When the police officer produced a breathalyzer Mr McCrea admitted to drinking not two but one glass of wine. Mr McCrea passed the breathalyzer and kept the mouthpiece provided. I was instructed not to discuss this with anyone.
- When I started to work for Mr McCrea on a paid basis I explained to him that due to the location of the office I would not be able to be in until 10:30am. When [REDACTED] was writing up my 'contract' I was told it would have to say I was starting at ten not half ten due to reasons unbeknown to me. I thought this was a big strange but agreed to it. I had discussed this with Mr McCrea at great length and he assured me this was fine. This turned out not to be fine. I was continuously questioned about my arrival time to the office, what time I left work each day. This questioning got so bad and intrusive that Mr McCrea thought it appropriate to hide in his car and wait for my bus to arrive at the station. When I came into work that morning Mr McCrea was waiting for me getting in. He questioned me about how I travelled to work that morning, what time my bus got in, and where I had been between 10:20 and 10:30. I told Mr McCrea I got a taxi that morning and I had been at People First handing in my timesheets as they have to be in before lunchtime. This was not good enough for Mr McCrea as a few days later received a phone call from Karen Tabahe explaining Mr McCrea would like me to phone from the landline each morning to her mobile and when I left the office to document the times. I categorically refused to do this. I felt like I was being segregated and harassed by my boss. I was absolutely outraged by this and sent Mr McCrea a text message asking him to meet me when free. A few hours later Mr McCrea showed up alone. During this meeting I expressed my outrage and disgust that I wasn't being treated equally or like a trustworthy member of staff. I stated that I would certainly clock in and clock out if the correct systems were put into place. These were never implemented. Mr McCrea approached other members of staff and told them that I was always late in, I wasn't pulling my weight and wasn't doing what I was told. This in my opinion all comes back to harassment and bullying in the workplace. [REDACTED] was present when I received the phone call from Karen Tabahe informing me of the new rules for me. Please see photos as evidence Mr McCrea agreed to my starting time of 10:30am as you can see by the signature on my timesheet.



- When working in the Lisburn office I was in charge of its every day running. One task was to collect in money for the sale of T-Shirts and membership. I had an envelope with about £150 that was collected over a number of weeks. This envelope was stored in the back of the filing cabinet, only Mr McCrea knew this was there. I received a phone call telling me we needed money to pay the bill. I went to get the money from the filing cabinet only to discover it was gone. Upon discovering the money was missing, I did what I deemed appropriate procedure. At this stage there was no security on the office door, even though I had brought it to Mr McCrea's attention and emailed Suzanne Chalkley about the issue. I contacted Suzanne Chalkley the time and informed her the money was missing, she was acting manager at the time. I contacted the Stormont office and asked them had anyone taken the money. After searching the office for about a week I was going to approach Mr McCrea to inform him the money was missing when I was told Mr McCrea had in fact come into the office, taken the money and not said to anyone. In regards to the security of the office, I had informed the correct people the office was not secure with sensitive documents lying about. This issue was not resolved until I went to the local hardware store, used my own money and contacted a locksmith to get advice on how to fix the lock.

Please see photos to show the security of the office at the time and the filing cabinet with no key.
- When you are part of a political party you are given assigned funds to help with the day to day running of the office within Stormont. These funds, under no circumstances, should be used to fund NI21 party work or PR etc. When working in the Lisburn office I was instructed by Mr McCrea to print out invites on 300 or more headed paper and envelopes paid for out of his office cost allowance. Mr McCrea was advised not to do this several times as it wasn't allowed but as always Mr McCrea knows best. This is another example of how Mr McCrea thinks the rules of law do not apply to him. This is a clear violation of the stipulations laid out by Stormont.
- Through my years of being employed it has become apparent to me that when a meeting is called to discuss an employee/employer then the people in question should not coerce each other on what to say. Alan Patterson came on board as another acting line manager. After a few weeks I expressed my ill feelings and issues about Mr McCrea. I thought nothing of this as it was a passing comment and not an official complaint. A few days later I received a phone call from Mr McCrea telling me he was coming to get me. I asked what was wrong but was told he would explain later. When Mr McCrea picked me up he informed me I had placed a complaint about him and Alan would like a meeting. Mr McCrea then asked me what I was going to say. I told him I was going to say we had our issues but they are now resolved. I was instructed not to say anything in regards to this, I had to say everything was fine and I had no issues. Mr McCrea put me in an uncomfortable position and put me on the spot with his line of questioning.
- Mr McCrea would make advances on me and feel bum, legs etc. He would make sexual comments about me. This started from about two weeks after I started working for him until I started to work in the office in Lisburn in August. Mr McCrea made me feel like this was something I had to put up with and it came with the territory. I witnessed many a situation with Mr McCrea leering at women and it seemed like the normal practice; see something, say nothing. During conversations with Mr McCrea he told me that if I were to ever mention this to anyone then he would destroy me. I later came to realize that Mr McCrea was keeping what he classed as evidence against me, please see photo attached.





- During April time of 2013 Mr McCrea held a meeting in La Mon hotel for like-minded people to gather and discuss the new political party. After the meeting was over a lot of drink was consumed. Mr McCrea asked me to get something from his room, when I went up to his room he followed. Mr McCrea made advances on me and came towards me with his pants round his ankles. Mr McCrea managed to pull down my tights. I told Mr McCrea 'No' and he stopped. I put this down to ill judgment and alcohol consumption. No sexual intercourse took place. Months later I was sent to the Lisburn office and the attitude I started to receive of Mr McCrea was worse than before. He would completely ignore me, he would ignore emails I sent, messages I sent, phone calls. Mr McCrea finally decided to talk to me again and took me out one day in the car. I asked him why he was treating me the way he was [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

I am aware that reading this I may seem a naive silly girl but in fact I was an unemployed vulnerable adult with a home to run at 21 and all I wanted was a break. Mr McCrea seen this and took advantage of me emotional, physically and sexually. Mr McCrea abused his power and his trust and should never be allowed to be in the powerful position that he is in.

I have attached several photos to back up some of the statements I have made in this letter. I hope they are useful to you. If you need any more information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Many Thanks  
Ashleigh Murray



Text message exchange between Basil McCrea and Ashleigh Murray on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013.

I've spoken to Suzanne.  
Really sorry that you're  
going but I understand  
your rational. Pleased that  
you want to stay involved  
with the conference and  
the party. Just want to say  
thanks for all of your hard  
work.  
Basil :)

●●○○○ Vodafone UK 17:06



Contact

It really broke my heart to  
leave! I live the party and  
everyone in it! I have told  
Kirsty I will help out on my  
days off etc! I will also train  
whoever you want in the  
office. If the financial  
situation changes let me  
know and I will be back in  
a heart beat! Thank you  
soooooo much for  
everything, you took a  
chance on me when I  
needed and ill never forget  
it :) x

[REDACTED]

DB 37

15.05.14

Ashleigh Murray

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to express my deepest concerns and disgust in relation to Mr Basil McCrea, Leader of NI21 political party. Firstly I apologise in advance if it seems like I am rambling but everything your about to read is important to understand the type of man you will or have been dealing with, and the heinous actions myself and others have suffered at his hands.

I first met Mr McCrea when I worked voluntry for The Princes Trust. He presented me with a certificate in Stormont, during the presentation we had to take a photo together, at this stage he put his arm round my waist and whispered in my ear, 'If we were seen in the newspapers together, we would cause such a stir'. This was my first time meeting a politician.

I later met Mr McCrea at a round table event in Stormont, again through The Princes Trust. We discussed what we as young people expected from politicians and Northern Ireland. After the event we were leaving and Mr McCrea pulled me to the side and said he would have a job for me in his office and to get in touch.

During a period of unemployment I contacted Basil through facebook and asked if he would have any employment opportunities in his office. I went to Mr McCreas office to meet him, finally after 3 times waiting to meet him, he showed up.

During my time working for Mr McCrea and NI21 I have witnessed incidents, heard about incidents and on occasions, very often, I would be subject of Mr McCreas' irrational behaviour.

On many an occasion I have had to listen to Mr McCrea talk derogitorly about a member/ex member of staff, Jamie Mckrell. He would ask my opinion on whether to fire Karen Tabahe, member of staff, committed for approximately 6 years. Blame John McCallister for their financial issues. Stand over and shout at [REDACTED] that she wasn't working quick enough and console my friend after she was groped by him at a work conference.

These issues were brought to the attention of any acting line manager at the time, there were a few. Mr McCrea was approached by by members of senior staff including, [REDACTED] current Chair woman, [REDACTED] ex employee, Alan Patterson, ex line manager. Mr McCrea repeatedly told them that he is the boss, what he says goes. [REDACTED] once held a meeting with myself in her office

Every member of staff within Mr McCreas office and NI21 party work extremely hard and go above and beyond their role within the party. I/they were and probably still are treated with the no shed of decency, respect honesty or intergrity.

1234567890  
1234567890  
1234567890

The first part of the report is a general introduction to the project. It describes the purpose of the study and the objectives that were set at the beginning. The second part is a detailed description of the methodology used in the study. This includes a description of the data collection methods, the sample size, and the statistical tests that were used to analyze the data. The third part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study. This section describes the findings of the study and compares them to the results of previous studies. The final part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references.

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** McAteer, Fiona <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2014 18:30  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Carecall investigation

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi [REDACTED],

John wanted me to forward the below email to you.

Thanks  
Fiona

**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2014 18:24:58  
**To:** McAteer, Fiona  
**Subject:** Fwd: Carecall investigation

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "McCallister, John" <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 24 May 2014 20:47:36 BST  
**To:** Fiona McAteer <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Carecall investigation

Fiona

Neil called me and give this info below. Can you forward to Carecall please.

John

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Neil McNickle <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 24 May 2014 20:24:51 BST  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Carecall investigation

Dear John,

Following the recent press coverage I felt I should make you aware of an incident which I believe occurred in either September or October last year. I

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



am unable to remember the exact date.

Basil McCrea called me one evening and asked me 'to do him a favour'. He told me that Ashleigh Murray was creating a problem with poor time keeping and was constantly claiming that her bus was late.

He asked me if I would take a drive past [REDACTED] one morning around 9AM and see if Ashleigh was at bus stop. I told Basil I wouldn't do it as I didn't feel it was appropriate behaviour.

He attempted to persuade me by saying Ashleigh played on issues surrounding her father, who I believe was a [REDACTED] and that she 'constantly played on the issue and tried to use it for sympathy'. He further added that she had physiological issues.

I again refused and ended the call. At time I thought it strange but thought nothing more of it.

Kind Regards  
Neil McNickle

Sent from my iPhone



**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** SUZANNE CHALKLEY

**Date:** Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
Suzanne Chalkley  
[REDACTED], Notetaker

**Time Started:** 12.29pm

**Time Ended:** 1.25pm

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** Good Afternoon and thank you for coming to help me with my investigation.
- CHALKLEY:** No problem at all.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Do you prefer to take the oath or to make an affirmation?
- CHALKLEY:** The oath is fine, yeah.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Would you take the Bible in your right hand and read the words of the oath from the card.
- CHALKLEY:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Thank you very much. Now there are a couple of procedural points that I have to deal with for the rules. Have you received before coming today a notice from me?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes I did.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And did that give you an outline of the areas we'd be covering?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And did you also receive from me a note on the procedure that would be followed?
- CHALKLEY:** I did yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** And do you have any questions about these?
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Not at all, no.
- COMMISSIONER:** Thank you. And how would you prefer me to address during this meeting, as Mrs Chalkley, or Miss Chalkley?
- H.

A.

**CHALKLEY:** Suzanne is fine yeah.

B.

**COMMISSIONER:** Okay, thank you very much. Now Suzanne, I was looking at the internet yesterday and in the Belfast Telegraph report of the launch of NI21 that was published in June 2013, you're listed as one of the six individuals who would front NI21 along with Basil McCrea and John McCallister. Can I ask you when you first became involved with NI21 or Mr McCrea?

C.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes it was actually before it launched. In a business capacity I had met Basil, one of the companies that I front, we co-sponsored a Miss Ulster, I think it was, that was held here at Stormont and I met with him at that point and he had said about, if there was anything that he could ever do and there was another product that I was interested in, you know, getting a little bit more information on the government aspect of it because it was a health product. I met him and then he had contacted me about NI21. He suggested he thought I might be quite good at politics because I never answered any of his questions directly and so then when he told me about John and himself starting NI21 I met with him first of all and then I just thought it might have been an opportunity. So that's really how it started. So it was before NI21 actually had a name.

D.

E.

**COMMISSIONER:** And am I correct in thinking you've never been ... you're self-employed and you've never been in the paid employment of Mr McCrea and Mr McCallister?

**CHALKLEY:** No.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** Or NI21?

**CHALKLEY:** No.

G.

**COMMISSIONER:** And are you still involved with NI21?

**CHALKLEY:** No not at all. I actually resigned from the executive before everything all sort of kicked off. I had an inkling that things weren't good, so I phoned [REDACTED] and said look ... the reason I gave was I was too busy with my work to be putting any more effort into NI21.

H.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** And while you were involved with NI21, how much time did it take up?
- CHALKLEY:** Well it started to take up more time than I had envisaged initially. The time was ... I saw it as a benefit to me because we were sent on quite a few courses, media courses etc. and then when I was asked to get more involved in working with
- B. Ashleigh Murray, then I was going to Lisburn, you know, at least once sometimes twice a week to call in and sort some bits and pieces out ... and just really meetings and sort of the expectation ... but it became busier than I had really anticipated.
- COMMISSIONER:** Am I right in thinking that you never had an office in Stormont or
- C. anything like that?
- CHALKLEY:** No, no I used to just come up and use the room that everybody was in.
- COMMISSIONER:** Now you mentioned Ashleigh Murray and that's the first area I want to
- D. deal with with you. Did you come to have a role in relation to Miss Murray's management?
- CHALKLEY:** Did I ... sorry?
- COMMISSIONER:** Did you come to have a role in relation to Miss Murray's management?
- E. **CHALKLEY:** Yes but not officially. I was asked if I could, you know, work with her and sort of manage her at that particular time that there was the office in Lisburn, at Bow Street Mall.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And I think that office in Lisburn started operating sometime in mid-July of 2013.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes, it was only a matter, to be honest, of weeks, you know, it wasn't very long
- G. at all that I was going in and out.
- COMMISSIONER:** And perhaps I could give you a bundle of documents. It would easier to look at them together. And we're looking first of all at a document marked Appendix 7c. You see that's a note of a meeting between [REDACTED] and Miss Murray on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013. And it seems to be a sort of performance review meeting.
- H.

- A. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** Were you present at that meeting?
- B. **CHALKLEY:** I was present at one meeting with [REDACTED] and Ashleigh and that was at the Lisburn office but I couldn't tell you when it actually was.
- COMMISSIONER:** Well perhaps when we come to the detail you may be able to say if this was the meeting that you were at. You'll see the first heading is 'Attendance and Punctuality' and it records a number of days when Ashleigh Murray wasn't at work.
- C. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** And then there's an issue about a change to her contracted hours.
- D. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** Seeing that does that ... is that the meeting you were at?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes I think that was, yes. That was ... yeah ... I think that was.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And I think reading short, Ashleigh said at the meeting, Ashleigh Murray said she'd agreed with Mr McCrea and Alan, I think that'd be Alan Patterson ...was it?
- F. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** ... that although her contract said she was to start work at 10 o'clock that she wasn't, in fact, going to start until 10.30.
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes I remember something vaguely about it. I think what it was was originally when the contract I think was based when she was doing her hours here because she was getting buses and she had told us that it was a little bit more difficult time wise to get buses to be at Lisburn for 10 o'clock so ...
- H. **COMMISSIONER:** And I think she was reminded at the meeting, if this note's correct, that these had to be properly documented.

A.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Is that right? And just dealing with the sickness. You see there, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> that must be August, 'dog sick'.

B.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes I remember something to do with... something had happened the dog but I don't recall the details.

C.

**COMMISSIONER:** We'll perhaps return to that a little later and then 31<sup>st</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> July and apparently 30<sup>th</sup> September ... was that doctor's appointments. Was that giving notice that she would be off on these dates due to ... ?

D.

**CHALKLEY:** I can't ... I really can't recall. I think at that stage it was maybe she was ... phoned in to say she had to go to the doctor. I really don't remember to be honest.

E.

**COMMISSIONER:** You see if I'm reading this correctly, 30<sup>th</sup> September was actually after the date of this meeting, which was on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

**CHALKLEY:** I think they were talking retrospectively because there had been some issues that Mr McCrea wanted us to go and deal with. So I think it could very well have been discussing things that had already happened.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes but you see 30<sup>th</sup> September must ... was two weeks in the future, at the time of this meeting.

**CHALKLEY:** Right, yes and that doesn't make sense.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

G.

**CHALKLEY:** Well I do know that she had a [REDACTED] something to do with [REDACTED] and she had to go regularly [REDACTED] Whether that's related to it ... it maybe, I don't know.

H.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]



- A. **CHALKLEY:** Right.
- COMMISSIONER:** Or at least that's what she told ...
- CHALKLEY:** Right.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Then, just coming down the note. You see the last paragraph under the heading, 'Next Month' and the second item there is 'Suzanne will agree Ashleigh's detailed KPIs over the next few weeks' and that reference to Suzanne is to you?
- C. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** And were her key performance indicators agreed do you remember?
- CHALKLEY:** Well I recall writing up ... I did go for a meeting because at that stage she was on some kind of ... there was a company that were paying towards her ...
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Was that Surestart?
- CHALKLEY:** No, something like that. They were paying towards ... so that she was getting paid from Stormont but they were paying into Stormont. So I remember having a meeting with whoever the manager of Ashleigh was in that capacity. We had a few meetings ... things sort of ... the office in Lisburn was a little bit haphazard. She didn't really have ... as a business person ... she didn't really have a real guidance or a real job ... she was ... I think her title was, 'Constituent's Officer'. But there was nobody really there to kind of give her any guidance or ... it was a little, you know, in fairness it was a little haphazard. I actually did feel a bit sorry when I would go in because I was just thrown the, 'can you manage her', but nobody had really given me the guidelines on what she was supposed to be doing either to be honest.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. So at this ... is it fair to say that at this meeting there were timekeeping issues and attendance issues?
- F. **CHALKLEY:** Yes that was the main thing that that was about. I do recall that she ended up in tears in that particular meeting. I don't really know what the cause of it was but I do remember her being ... getting upset over the discussions.
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes that was the main thing that that was about. I do recall that she ended up in tears in that particular meeting. I don't really know what the cause of it was but I do remember her being ... getting upset over the discussions.
- H. **CHALKLEY:** Yes that was the main thing that that was about. I do recall that she ended up in tears in that particular meeting. I don't really know what the cause of it was but I do remember her being ... getting upset over the discussions.

A. **COMMISSIONER:** Were you aware at that time of her previous employment?

**CHALKLEY:** Previous employment with ...?

**COMMISSIONER:** With anyone. Did you have any details of what she'd done in the past?

B. **CHALKLEY:** Yes I knew she had been something to do with the... Prince's Trust.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes.

C. **CHALKLEY:** I knew she had some role within that because I think that's how she first came under the spotlight with ... Basil had met her in that capacity. But no I didn't ... just through conversation she'd said about working in a nursing home in England etc. Because the only reason I know, is when we did our media training, we were all interviewed and then she would discuss a little bit more about her past in the interview. So that's really how I know anything at all.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** At any time did she tell you that she'd been working in a nursing home

[REDACTED]

E. **CHALKLEY:** No. No.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

F. **CHALKLEY:** No. No.

**COMMISSIONER:** Did ... she ... she told you that she'd been working in a nursing home in England ... is your recollection?

G. **CHALKLEY:** Yeah ... it was only ... she didn't tell me ... it was in an interview that ... with ... like a mock-up interview. So I just recall it at that stage, but no.

**COMMISSIONER:** Then can I ask you to look at the next document with is marked BM8 and I think that's an email from Ashleigh Murray to you on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

H. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

A.

**COMMISSIONER:** And is that seeking a further change to her hours of work?

B.

**CHALKLEY:** I think ... I think it was to show ... I'll just read through it sorry. Yes I think it was showing that when she was moved out to Lisburn, that the times or the cost of her getting taxis, bus to be at a certain time ... I think that was mainly to try and show me, you know, the cost involved and if she was to be there for that particular time.

C.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Monday to Thursday.

D.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** That she saves money.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes that's what she was saying to me, if she could make those changes.

E.

**COMMISSIONER:** So that would be further changes because they'd been changed once already so that she could get there by bus.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes that's right.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** And what she's saying in this, if I read it correctly, that although that change had been made, so that she could travel by bus and get there on time, she wasn't in fact doing that, she was taking taxis.

G.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And how did you react to this email?

H.

**CHALKLEY:** From memory I think I spoke to either [REDACTED] ... I think yes it probably was [REDACTED] and we said look as long as her hours were being covered, if she started a bit earlier

- A. that was going to work but to make sure that she did attend and follow it through those times.
- COMMISSIONER:** And do you remember did you give that to Ashleigh, telling her that or had she left before you'd had a chance?
- B. **CHALKLEY:** I really can't remember because I had an NI21 email but I've had all these but when I left that then that was just, you know, removed so I would have no ... I would have no ... nothing to fall back on for that.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** I appreciate it's very difficult after all this time.
- CHALKLEY:** I think it was verbal but quite likely I would have replied by email. It's more than likely I would have done.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Now I think this was on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** And I understand that Miss Murray left without giving notice on 1<sup>st</sup> November, so a couple of days later?
- E. **CHALKLEY:** I was under the impression that she did give notice, I was under the impression. I know she had phoned and discussed it.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** Well she can't have given very much notice.
- CHALKLEY:** No.
- COMMISSIONER:** If only three days before she was trying to change her hours.
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes, that's right yeah. I have a vague recollection of there being a discussion between myself and Basil over her leaving.
- COMMISSIONER:** Well actually perhaps it will help you, if we look over at the next document marked Appendix 7a. You see that appears to be an email exchange between Basil McCrea and Ashleigh Murray on 1<sup>st</sup> November.
- H.

A.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And the first one is, 'I've spoken to Suzanne', which is you I think.

B.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And then saying he's very sorry, Ashleigh's going and so on.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

C.

**COMMISSIONER:** That would rather indicate that Basil must have got news that Ashleigh was leaving from you.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes, yes I had spoken to him about it.

D.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes, so when did you first learn that Ashleigh was leaving?

**CHALKLEY:** Well I'd been talking ... she was unhappy and I felt that things weren't going well. I, you know, in conversation with Basil I knew ... although you wouldn't read that in that particular text, but I knew he was ... he would have been happier to see her away and that's really in one of the respects why I was asked to be brought in. To kind of liaise directly with her to distance any contact that he would have to have with her. And I had encouraged her because she had been talking about leaving and I had actually encouraged her to ... you know she should really seek something else that she could get her ... you know ... get a job that she would be working at, content at, trained at etc. So I did encourage her.

E.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** Well you see I'm probably being very silly about this but I don't quite follow this. On the 28<sup>th</sup> October she's sending you an email asking for a change to her hours of work.

G.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** So presumably she hadn't given any notice by then.

H.

- A. **CHALKLEY:** No mustn't have. But very soon ... you see I can't really remember the ... if I had access to my emails and the dates I'd probably be able to be a bit more helpful on it. But I do know that from around that time, there had been discussions because her ... the money that was being paid to Stormont to help pay for her salary was coming to an end and I had ... she was concerned. She felt that she wouldn't be
- B. offered, you know, a paid position by NI21, Basil etc. and that's when we started to discuss ... and I said, look you know, if you were my daughter, I'd be sort of encouraging you to go and find a position. So that was really those conversations I had directly with her and told Basil that she was thinking of leaving. There was a little bit of confusion at that time and this kind of ... because I do remember these
- C. messages being sent to me, you know, it was all being very nice between them but you know, behind the scenes it wasn't really.

**COMMISSIONER:** And I think just for completeness the second email there is apparently Ashleigh Murray's response to Mr McCrea. Starting with, 'it really broke my heart to leave'.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And offering to continue to ...

**CHALKLEY:** Yes she actually did come for the Party Conference. She did come along to the afternoon of that so ... and that was after she left.

**COMMISSIONER:** Can I move on to deal with Mr McCrea's conduct. As you probably know I'm dealing with a number of complaints against him and amongst these are complaints about the way he treated staff and about his management style.

**CHALKLEY:** Okay.

**COMMISSIONER:** I mean from what you saw, generally to start with, how would you describe the way he treated staff and his management style?

**CHALKLEY:** I did actually have words with him with regard to his management style. He was a very ... he could be full of fun, laughter and very pleasant but he equally could be very bad tempered. So I had seen both sides. On one particular occasion I was in the office. I'd actually brought someone into meet Basil and the girls were in the



A. office. I think there were some things going on that he wanted recorded, you know they have this system that they can record and on that particular day Karen was there ... Ashleigh, no, no, sorry ... Kirsty ...

**COMMISSIONER:** Kirsty McClay?

B. **CHALKLEY:** McClay. And the other ... it was a Canadian girl.

**COMMISSIONER:** Jacqueline Neglia?

C. **CHALKLEY:** Yes. They were there and he was ... we were sitting ... if you imagine this was the office, there were two chairs up there, myself and it was [REDACTED] actually was ... he used to work for the Belfast Telegraph and he has [REDACTED], because Basil was interested in, you know, him being able to help. Maybe take some media video clips etc. of NI21. So we were waiting but he really was very sharp telling them to stop, do something, then not do it. And I could see the body language of everybody was a little bit uptight. But I was more embarrassed at the fact that I'd brought somebody in. So as he left, the gentleman left and then Basil brought me down to the front and we had a few words at the front of the building. And ... you know not ... when I say words I said what I felt and I actually said his man management skills were probably the poorest I'd seen because, you know, it was in front of people. But, you know, there were times when he was very good but it was just when he lost his temper, he was a little unreasonable.

D.

E.

**COMMISSIONER:** And was that during the period that NI21 was getting set up?

F. **CHALKLEY:** Yeah, we were ... yes it was already set up at that stage, yeah.

**COMMISSIONER:** Then dealing with particular individuals, did you come across Alan Patterson?

G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes I did.

**COMMISSIONER:** And did you ever see or hear Mr McCrea do anything towards Mr Patterson that you considered as improper?

H.

A. **CHALKLEY:** No. I do recall that there might have been tongue in cheek type comments.  
Not in his hearing. Alan was a very detailed person whereas Basil, you know, the  
management skills would not have been as, kind of, detailed in that respect. So no  
I've never heard anything directed to Alan. I haven't been in their company hearing  
anything like that but there would have been the odd tongue in cheek comment away  
B. from him about his being very ...

**COMMISSIONER:** Bureaucratic?

**CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** And did Mr Patterson, whilst during the short time you were still working  
with NI21, did he ever make any complaint to you about the way he was treated by  
Mr McCrea?

D. **CHALKLEY:** Not in an official capacity. We had met outside of work through ... there's a  
thing called Extras NI, and he did a bit of acting and we happened to meet at one of  
those events and he then spoke a little bit more about how he felt he was treated by  
Basil.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** But was that after he'd left NI21?

**CHALKLEY:** Yes, it would have been.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** I can't seem to manage to unscrew my pen ... get one that actually  
works. So during the time that he was still working at Stormont, did he make any  
complaint about Mr McCrea?

G. **CHALKLEY:** He may have, you know, in passing said something about the man  
management skills but to be honest we all did, you know, unofficially, but we all did,  
we all would have mentioned it at some stage.

**COMMISSIONER:** And then you mentioned that you met with Mr Patterson at NI Extras ...

**CHALKLEY:** Extras NI, yes.

H. **COMMISSIONER:** ... and did he say why he had stopped working for NI21?



- A. **CHALKLEY:** No, no. He had told me to keep a lookout in the media ... that things you know, that things would ... I would find out a bit more ... but no he didn't ... he didn't ... no he didn't really say anything. I don't recall.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Did he say ... do you remember him saying anything about Mr McCrea's management style?
- CHALKLEY:** On that ... well yes in general but we both did complain about it, you know.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** But you don't recall any specific ...
- CHALKLEY:** Nothing specific no, nothing specific.
- COMMISSIONER:** In particular did he ... did Mr Patterson ever say to you that he left because of the way he was treated by Mr McCrea?
- D. **CHALKLEY:** I don't know in that ... I think it was in just general conversation. I don't recall there something being specific because ... I don't know why but that sort of period of NI21, whether I was busy with other things, because I know that Alan was originally asked to manage the girls in the office and I had been at a meeting in the other room that we had. There was two rooms and he was organising at that point to go and have a meeting with each of them individually to go through their, you know, their job role and you know, the procedures, if they were unhappy about something to go through him. And then it seemed to be right, quite a short period of time and then he wasn't involved.
- E.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And when you were told by Mr Patterson to look out for the story ...
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** ... I take it that was some time before the elections in May of 2014?
- CHALKLEY:** That was just ... yes it was just ... no was it? Because it was ... when we met it was actually a series called, 'The Fall', it was an extras thing so when it was I really don't ... but he told me to keep a look out but ... no it wasn't imminent ... I
- H.

- A. don't think it was imminent. I can't really remember. I could go back in my diary and find out.
- COMMISSIONER:** Do you remember ... it's very difficult and it's not important to give a precise time but having been told this no doubt you were thinking, I wonder what
- B. that's all about.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes I did. I don't think it was ... I don't think it was just immediate within a few days but I do recall then I received a text from him because he was doing some musical thing, to say that he'd got a CD or something, to keep a look out for it and
- C. then when I was chatting to him ... then when the ... the time when the newspaper hit, I remember either texting him or phoning and says, oh now I know what you what you were talking about. But it was, you know, I really couldn't give you a time frame. It could have been ... I really couldn't remember. I would have to go back to find out when that Extras NI thing was and then whenever the ... you know the
- D. newspaper articles hit. I really can't remember.
- COMMISSIONER:** Just to be clear that was the newspaper article in which Miss Murray's allegations were featured?
- E. **CHALKLEY:** Well from ... yes, yes it would have been, yes it would have been.
- COMMISSIONER:** So it would appear that Mr Patterson knew about what Miss Murray was going to say before it actually appeared in public.
- F. **CHALKLEY:** It was either that or there was some newspaper article where he was ... I can't ... I mean was ... now there was a few people ... like phone calls were going backwards and forwards to be honest because you know, at that stage I had already resigned and left. So ... but people ... because I wasn't in the mix, people were saying, here have you heard such and such. So I would be getting phone
- G. calls from different people sort of getting my ... and at that stage I said, I want nothing to do with it at all. I'm out of it. That was one of the reasons I got away out of the road early because I didn't want it having any impact on my job or my career.
- COMMISSIONER:** I'm sorry to have to bring you back into it. Then you mentioned Karen
- H. Tabahe already and one incident when she was present.

A. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Did you see any other conduct of Mr McCrea towards Karen that you thought was inappropriate?

B. **CHALKLEY:** Well if I was to describe it, from someone outside looking in, in a business capacity. It seemed that when I first met Karen was at that time where Basil was still part of the Ulster Unionists and she was very happy. She seemed to love her job and was always you know ... then when it was NI21 I got the feeling that she was no longer of ... her skills set appeared to be a little bit old fashioned and not as  
C. in keeping with what he was looking for. So he did ... he did ... he was off hand with her ... that would probably ... but you could tell he was off hand with her and so I don't recall anything mean said to her directly but I know that she would have contacted me upset because she got the feeling that she was being, you know, no longer of use and tried to be elbowed out. But there was nothing that I could turn  
D. round and say, oh I remember him saying this, that or whatever.

**COMMISSIONER:** Now that's helpful. And then another person we've mentioned already, Jacqueline Neglia, the Canadian.

E. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Did you see any conduct or hear any conduct of Mr McCrea towards her that you considered to be improper?

F. **CHALKLEY:** Well only on the occasion ... Jacqueline was a different type of person. She was quite a strong personality and therefore would have stood her ground. Whereas the rest when he would throw the head ... tended to scuttle off or do what he ... whereas Jacqueline would have sort of squared up if ... using that term. She wouldn't have just backed down or agreed or walked away and I just ... I remember  
G. at one point thinking there's going to be fireworks here because she's not going to back down and it was going to be a little bit ... but ... Basil sort of smiled and kind of let it go at that point. It was over the chopping and changing. Right we're going to do this and then all of a sudden, now I want yous to do that and she felt very much like, this is ridiculous, do you want me to do this or do you want me to do that. So  
H. she stood her ground whereas I must admit the rest of them would have gone.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** Right so would it be fair to say she would give as good as she got?
- CHALKLEY:** She did yes, she did.
- COMMISSIONER:** And then did you come across Nigel Macauley?
- B. **CHALKLEY:** At the very end only through ... at the time of the party, the conference, the first party conference. He was starting to get involved a little bit before and just during that, that would have been my only dealings with Nigel.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Did you see anything in relation to Mr McCrea's conduct towards him?
- CHALKLEY:** No, no. I had really ... no nothing at all.
- COMMISSIONER:** Then can we come to Ashleigh Murray and did you really have much to do with her before she started in Lisburn?
- D. **CHALKLEY:** Yes in the capacity that I would have known what was you know, any arguments or angst or, you know, so not ... I would just be aware of what was going on.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. And did you yourself see or hear Mr McCrea acting in an improper way towards Ashleigh Murray?
- CHALKLEY:** I suppose when you say an improper way, he used to be ... he would have made comments when we were all there that ... I remember saying to [REDACTED] I know he didn't mean anything by it but we're all getting involved in this party and it was a bit like ... she was wearing a short skirt one day and he sort of made ... it was at one of the media training and it wasn't done in a lewd, you know way, it was just a throwaway comment but at the same time both [REDACTED] and myself noticed it and we wanted a kind of wee word with him that it probably wasn't appropriate to make comment about a young girl's legs in a short skirt.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And that was before she started in paid employment in Lisburn?
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- H.

A. **COMMISSIONER:** And anything else that you recall?

B. **CHALKLEY:** Well now I mean he did ask me at the time when we had our meeting at La Mon, he did ask me if I could take her under my wing and maybe help her with a little bit of skills set with regard to what she wore, or confidence or ... I do recall he asked me if I would take her under my wing and help in that respect. But no he ... in fairness he was always quite pleasant, quite close to her in that he was quite fond of her ... like they were always ... any meetings ... we'd been at a couple of things, she was always there in support and then it was just basically ... it was almost like she was pushed to the side and I think she felt that and when Kirsty came into the party etc., where it used to be Ashleigh would go to be in the car and go to all the different meetings, then she wasn't.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** I want to mention an event at La Mon Hotel which I think it was in April 2013 and that was a sort of brainstorming and get to know each other event. As I understand it.

D. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** And you were one of those present along with Mr McCrea, Ashleigh Murray and a number of others.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** And am I right in thinking that it was a two day event and some people were staying in the hotel overnight and others were going home.

**CHALKLEY:** That's right.

**COMMISSIONER:** And you were one of the ones that was staying.

G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** As was Mr McCrea.

H. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** And my understanding is Miss Murray was going to go home.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes. She ... yes I recall because she got a phone call ... something to do with her brother cut himself with glass, or something of that ... or the dog had cut itself with glass ... something but she got a taxi home probably ... it was after the dinner on the first night.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** And after the business for the day ...
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** ... the agenda was completed, did people socialise?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes we ...
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Before dinner and then you had dinner together?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes that's right, that's correct.
- COMMISSIONER:** And was drink taken?
- E. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** By the time she left, how would you describe Miss Murray's state as regards alcohol?
- F. **CHALKLEY:** She actually ... she never really drunk so I think ... you see I would be quite a control freak when it comes to business meetings. I would just have one or two glasses of wine through the evening. I don't really drink very much. So I only had a couple of glasses but I was very aware of everybody else's state of intoxication. But Ashleigh only had a couple of glasses of rosé. That's all she had.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** And what about Mr McCrea?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes he did have quite a few drinks. By the end of the evening he was definitely.
- H.



- A. **COMMISSIONER:** By the time Miss Murray left, what state was he in?
- CHALKLEY:** No, no he'd had few. He was in good form but no he wouldn't have been ... I wouldn't have said he was intoxicated. She left about 10 o'clock I think from memory.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** You see I've been told that she got a phone call to say that her dog was ill.
- CHALKLEY:** That's right yeah, something to do with ... and her brother was looking after ... her brother was at home and he was ... so she yes she left ... she was a bit upset ... when I say upset, initially, you know you get news of something going wrong but then she left but she was okay when she left.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** I don't suppose you know if that was the same dog that was sick?
- D. **CHALKLEY:** Oh yes ... she's on Facebook ... Marley it's called, black dog. There's always something wrong with it.
- COMMISSIONER:** Alright.
- E. **CHALKLEY:** It was either that dog or something, another dog outside, there was something but it was the brother had phoned. I think it was a younger brother upset about something so she went back home.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** Now did she come back to the event the following day, on the Sunday?
- CHALKLEY:** I can't remember and that's the truth. Because it was only really ... we got up and had breakfast, we went in for a bit of a meeting, there was a few other people arrived for that particular ... I think somebody had to talk about marketing and I don't remember if she was there or not to be honest.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** Now at La Mon did Miss Murray say anything to you about Mr McCrea's conduct towards her at that event?
- H. **CHALKLEY:** No.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** Then ... I'm missing a page. In particular, did she then or at any later date, tell you that at La Mon Mr McCrea had asked her to massage his shoulders?
- CHALKLEY:** No.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Or either at La Mon or any time thereafter did she tell you that Mr McCrea in his bedroom came towards her, made advances towards her? Came towards her with his pants round his ankles and pulled down her tights?
- CHALKLEY:** No I heard that after when all the allegations hit the newspaper but no she had never told me that, no.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** And in fact, after the La Mon event, at that stage she was a volunteer.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** And she took up employment with Mr McCrea and worked for him until 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 as we've discussed.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** So that's the period of 18 months after this event. Now could I turn to another of the complaints made in this regards. Money that allegedly went missing at the Lisburn office.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** Now I understand that one of Miss Murray's duties at the office was when NI21 t-shirts were sold or membership was paid ...
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** ... that she retained the money until it was uplifted, is that right?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes.
- H. **COMMISSIONER:** And do you remember a time when apparently the money went missing?



A.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** How did you first hear about that?

B.

**CHALKLEY:** I was in the office on that day and I was going to be going to the Dromore office to [REDACTED] who used to handle a lot of the ... you know she would have done the lodgements etc.

**COMMISSIONER:** [REDACTED]?

C.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes and I was in and Ashleigh said, oh yes there's some money in the filing cabinet and I remember it quite clearly that particular day. She was going through the filing cabinet and I was watching her. Her face drained of colour because she kept going through and going through and then quite frantically going through to try and find this envelope of money. And then when she told me it's not here I then started to help to look and then we phoned ... she panicked thinking that she was going to be held responsible. She started to cry, "is that going to have to come out of my money because I was to look after it". The bottom line was there was no lock on the door in the office. There was no lock on the filing cabinet. So we did ... it was upstairs from a café, so we did kind of think, oh is it possible somebody has come in to take it. It didn't seem likely because it was just a filing cabinet with files. People wouldn't have known there was money kept in there. I remember I knew that Basil would have been absolutely bouncing mad so I avoided telling Basil so I contacted Kirsty at the office. Just to ask the question, did anybody come into the office to take the money? I then spoke to [REDACTED] who then admitted to or said to me, don't say anything but Basil was in the office and he took that money but don't ... basically don't tell her because sort of ... whether it was teach her a lesson, I don't ... I was uncomfortable with it. The first thing I did was tell Ashleigh that Basil had been in and he took the money. When I spoke to Basil about it he said that that was money for t-shirts and that he personally had bought the t-shirts originally and therefore that money was his to replenish what he'd already spent on them.

D.

E.

F.

G.

**COMMISSIONER:** And this series of phone calls when you eventually discovered from [REDACTED] that Basil had taken the money. Were you still there ... did you make all these calls from the office?

H.

- A. **CHALKLEY:** Probably my mobile.
- COMMISSIONER:** Yes.
- CHALKLEY:** Or the office, you know, the phone number ...
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** But at the time you were there with Ashleigh crying is that right?
- CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** So it's alleged that she searched the office for five days before she discovered that Basil had taken the money. That wouldn't be correct.
- CHALKLEY:** Well saying that it could have been a couple of days of phone calls before we actually found out ... you know I remember speaking to ... but when I spoke to [REDACTED] it could have been that day, it may have been a couple of ... it was within a few days.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Certainly not as long as five days?
- E. **CHALKLEY:** I wouldn't have thought so. But you know, my ... I just remember making the phone calls. My initial calls were to Kirsty at the office to ask was it possible anybody from Stormont office was down and when I spoke to [REDACTED] definitely ... more than likely it wasn't that day, it was within a couple of days because I'd gone straight then to [REDACTED] in Dromore. So it may have been a couple of days before we actually got to the bottom of where the money was.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And you'll be pleased to know we're very close to the end. Can I turn now to some payments that were apparently made by ... between Ashleigh Murray and Basil McCrea.
- G. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** In July and August of 2013. I think you've agreed with me that Ashleigh Murray started her paid work in mid-July 2013 and my understanding is that she was going onto the Assembly payroll and because of the time she started work she wouldn't actually be paid until the end of August.
- H.

A.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Two weeks wouldn't be paid and that to cover her over that period, she got an advance ...

B.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** ... from Basil and could you look at the next document, marked BM4 and you see that's an email from Ashleigh to you on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2013 enclosing a copy of her payslip.

C.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And if you turn over to the next document, is that piece of ... I hope ...

D.

**CHALKLEY:** Just be the other way round yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** Do you see it's her salary's £804.70 and salary back pay £441.29 and that would be the back pay for the two weeks in July that she'd worked.

E.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And then could you please look at BM6. And that's an email from you to Ashleigh, copied to Mr McCrea on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013. In which you set out essentially that she owed money back to Basil for the three cheques of £183.

F.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And you'd received £50 in cash of the first payment. Was that during one of your visits to the office?

G.

**CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And suggested that she set up a direct debit or standing order or whatever it is.

H.

A. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** So at that stage she could have been in no doubt that this was a loan that she had received from Mr McCrea.

B. **CHALKLEY:** Well I was asked to sort of deal with it after the fact, it was ... it appeared it was quite a little while after she got that money then Basil said that she owed him money because he had paid her out of, you know, his ... whatever the account and he was quite adamant that she had to pay that back but it wasn't immediate. It wasn't within ... wasn't as soon as she got her pay cheque from memory because it had gone on for, you know, definitely a few weeks before I got involved in it.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** But she accepted, didn't she, that it was a loan?

D. **CHALKLEY:** Once ... she didn't initially ... she didn't ... the cogs weren't turning and then when it was explained to her, because I spoke to [REDACTED] about it. So it was her that was able to work ... tell me what the cheques were etc. and then when I explained it to her, she then said she didn't have the money to pay him back in full because she paid off credit cards or whatever and that's when I said ... I remember I had meetings with Basil to say, listen Basil, you know what, even if you get it in small chunks, you'll get it back as opposed to not getting it at all. But she did agree with it then after ... when it was sort of all clarified and explained to her.

**COMMISSIONER:** Okay. Then there's one matter I haven't asked you about and it's Mr McCrea's conduct towards you.

E. **CHALKLEY:** Right.

**COMMISSIONER:** Did he ever do or say anything towards you that you regarded as improper?

G. **CHALKLEY:** Well I suppose because I'm closer to fifty than forty ... you know in a business capacity you're used to somebody if they've had a few drinks, to maybe say something, but I just brushed it off to be honest. So it wouldn't have been something that alarmed or you know, it made me a little more aware just that he was fond of women's company. But I wasn't alarmed by it. In fact what I did do was make sure that there were other people, [REDACTED] was there that night,

H.

A. [REDACTED] I made sure that ... I told them so that it wasn't seen ... because I was concerned that people would think ... ah, you know, that I was welcoming the attention, which I wasn't and I made it very clear that I wasn't. So he apologised.

**COMMISSIONER:** Sorry you said that night, what night was that?

B. **CHALKLEY:** That was the night of La Mon.

**COMMISSIONER:** So he'd sort of ... well what had actually happened as you remember?

C. **CHALKLEY:** It was just ... we were sitting down, John and [REDACTED] were sitting, chatting ... a drink at the bar. I was with ... it was a young guy who ended up doing the policy writing, Hutchinson.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes.

D. **CHALKLEY:** He ...

**COMMISSIONER:** Peter?

E. **CHALKLEY:** Yes Peter was there, [REDACTED], Basil, myself and I don't know ... there was somebody else, just ... and I was sitting on a sofa and Basil sat beside me and there was an arm on the sofa and he sat beside me and he put his arm just ... you know at the back where you'd ... you feel somebody ... you know put their hand on the lower back. And I remember sort of shifting forward because Peter Hutchinson was sitting in a chair in front and he would have been able to see the hand at my side. And I didn't want anybody to think that there was something going on or I was encouraging. So I remember sitting forward and [REDACTED] was on the chair opposite ... you know just opposite and I saw her look as well as if to go, oh, so I made it very clear kind of that it wasn't ... it wasn't what it may have appeared. So I just moved myself away from that and the only other thing really was he called my room later that night to ask if I wanted company. And I said no thank you and that was it.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** And do I take it from that that as soon as you made it clear that the advances weren't welcome that was the end of it.

H.

- A. **CHALKLEY:** Yes, yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** Now do you wish to add anything or change anything in any of the answers you've given?
- B. **CHALKLEY:** No, no it's ... as I remember it or understand it.
- COMMISSIONER:** And I appreciate how difficult it is after this length of time.
- CHALKLEY:** Yes ... just the particular dates you know, whatever I wouldn't be sure of at all.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Is there anything else that you think might be relevant to my investigation of these complaints that you want to tell me?
- D. **CHALKLEY:** Well I ... I would be quite convinced that something had gone wrong between the working relationship between Ashleigh and Basil. I don't know what that is or the seriousness of it but I know that that was the reason I was brought in to keep a distance between the two of them and there was something that Basil had said to me in one particular meeting, he treated her quite badly in front of me which made me very suspicious of why you would be really friendly and she was always at events and always there to all of a sudden trying to keep her as far away ... and a comment was made about ... she could ... you know ... she could damage the party but he never told me what the damage was. Now, what ... when I read the ... what supposedly had happened in the room. It ... as a female point of view ... it didn't sit with me because I don't know when it was likely to have happened. I remember Basil actually phoning me to ask did ... you know what my opinion was ... you know at ... of that evening. Asking did I think did she leave at any time? Really she was mainly in my company most of the time and I recall her only really being ... apart from when we all went up to our rooms to get refreshed to be back down for dinner. It was really the only time that she wasn't about and I think she probably was out of my sight for forty, forty five minutes and that would have been it. And then Basil went with her to get her taxi home and that was a short period of time. So it didn't ring true because if it ... shouldn't ... giving my opinion ... shouldn't really ... but if something like that had have happened me or my daughter then I think you'd be a little bit more alarmed. You know you'd be unlikely to come and sit and have dinner and have fun ... so something has gone wrong between
- E.
- F.
- G.
- H.



A. them because [REDACTED] and I discussed that something had happened. But what I don't know.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** I don't want to put words into your mouth but am I right in saying from Ashleigh Murray's demeanour as you saw it on that night, you didn't think it was consistent with the account of what is said to have gone on between her and Mr McCrea?

**CHALKLEY:** Definitely not. You know ... and if it has I apologise to the girl but I would not have known anything had occurred that was of, you know, a serious nature like that.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Then do you have any complaints to make about the way in which I've treated you at this interview?

**CHALKLEY:** No not at all.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** And then can I just remind you that provision of section 33 of the Act that it would be unlawful of you to discuss with anyone what has taken place here today until the report is published.

E. **CHALKLEY:** Yes.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** Now the procedure now will be that hopefully early next week we will send you a transcript of this and you've an opportunity to suggest revisions to it. We'll email it to you. So if you can suggest any changes by tracked changes it makes it much easier and then once we have finalised the transcript, and generally they are done by a professional firm so they are pretty accurate, then that's your report done. And very shortly I hope to submit my report to the Committee, if of course there is a committee to submit it to. And all it leaves me to do is to thank you very much for your help. That has actually been very helpful to me and the time is now 1.25 and we'll terminate the interview.

G. **CHALKLEY:** Okay. Thank you.

H.

A. [Ends]

B.

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

H.



**DB 40**

**DVD 'The View'**

## TELEPHONE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Jacquelyn Neglia

**Date:** 26 January 2015

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
Jacquelyn Neglia

**Time Started:** 17.01 pm (UK)  
12.01 pm (Canada)

- A. **DB:** This is the interview of Jacquelyn Neglia being taken by telephone on 26 January 2015. The time is 5.01 pm UK time and one minute past 12 noon in Canada, where Jacquelyn is residing.

Before we start, can I just explain to you that, in Northern Ireland, it would be a criminal offence for you to give me a false or misleading answer or to refuse to answer any question? Do you understand? Hello?

**JN:** I do, yes.

**DB:** OK. That's the formal bit. Can I just ask you to repeat the words of the affirmation after me?

**JN:** The sound isn't that great. It's very furry.

**DB:** OK. I do solemnly, sincerely and truly —

- B. **JN:** I do solemnly, sincerely and truly —

**DB:** — declare and affirm —

**JN:** Sorry, can you say that one more time?

**DB:** — declare and affirm —

**JN:** — declare and —

**DB:** — affirm —

**JN:** Sorry, I can't hear you.

**DB:** OK. It's "declare and affirm" — A F F I R M —

- C. **JN:** — declare and affirm —

**DB:** — that the evidence I shall give —

**JN:** — that the evidence I shall give —

**DB:** — shall be the truth —

**JN:** — shall be the truth —

**DB:** — the whole truth —

**JN:** — the whole truth —

**DB:** — and nothing but the truth —

**A.**     **JN:** — and nothing but the truth.

**DB:** OK because we had a rehearsal of this, when I failed to get the recorder to work, we can probably go through some of this rather quicker than last time.

**JN:** Yes.

**DB:** Can I just make sure that I've got the sequence of events at the start correct? I think, in June 2012, you spent three weeks in Northern Ireland on the young ambassador programme. Is that right?

**JN:** Yes.

**DB:** And for two weeks of that you were on a placement with Mr Basil McCrea.

**B.**     **JN:** Yes.

**DB:** That was in June, and a couple of months later, in August of 2012, Mr McCrea visited Canada on holiday and you met him during that visit.

**JN:** Yes.

**DB:** Did he say that there might be a job for you working for him the following year?

**JN:** I can't hear you. Sorry?

**DB:** Did he say that he might have a job for you the following year?

**JN:** Yes. Yes, he did.

**DB:** I think, in fact, you started working for him in early June of 2013.

**C.**     **JN:** Yes, which was when he asked me join him.

**DB:** Yes. Were you at university at the time?

**JN:** Sorry, can you say that one more time?

**DB:** Were you at university and so you couldn't start working until June of 2013?

**JN:** Yes. No, I couldn't start because I was in school.

**DB:** Yes, and am I right in thinking that you worked for Mr McCrea until June 2014?

**JN:** Yes.

**DB:** Now, while you were — While Mr McCrea was in Canada, I think he met your parents and, indeed, your grandparents.

**A. JN:** Yes, my grandmother and my parents.

**DB:** Yes, and was there an occasion when he took some photographs of you?

**JN:** Yes, one in his hotel room and another when we went to the CN Tower when we were walking around Toronto, I think.

**DB:** OK. And did you know he was taking those photographs?

**JN:** Some of them yes, some of them no. To be quite honest, I am not 100% sure which ones.

**DB:** OK, but the ones that feature in the complaint against him are photographs of you in a red dress. Was that what you were wearing on an occasion when you were in his bedroom at his hotel?

**JN:** Yes, one was when I was in the same room as him.

**B. DB:** Yes. And you were fully clothed in this red dress?

**JN:** I can't hear you, sorry.

**DB:** You had a red dress on at the time.

**JN:** No, not in the hotel room. In that hotel room, I had something else on — a white shirt and shorts.

**DB:** OK.

**JN:** Because that was on a different day when I was wearing the red dress.

**DB:** OK. And did you discover, while you were working in Northern Ireland, that these photographs were stored in the private photographs folder on Mr McCrea's computer?

**C. JN:** Yes, I did.

**DB:** And was that folder open to a number of members of his staff?

**JN:** Yes. A few of the employees had access to it.

**DB:** Yes. So, he wasn't, it would seem, making any secret of having these photographs.

**JN:** Well, honestly, for me it was startling because I don't remember giving him permission to take those photographs, so that's why I was upset. I don't know if he was comfortable with other people seeing them. I'm not sure if he would know that they were on his camera. I honestly — It's not up to me to speculate but I was uncomfortable seeing those photos that I didn't know were taken.

A. **DB:** But, sorry, can I just make sure I'm understanding this. I thought you did know he was taking the photograph of you in a red dress, for example.

**JN:** No. Some of them I did know and some of them I didn't know. There are some pictures where I wasn't looking at the camera. I hadn't, you know — There were pictures just of my dress taken and some of them I did know that he had taken.

**DB:** OK.

**JN:** So, that's why I was uncomfortable finding the photos. If I had known that he had taken all of them, I wouldn't care, I would have given him permission for that. It may have been embarrassing to be on a work computer —

**DB:** Yes.

**JN:** I was upset because a lot of the pictures I didn't know he had taken.

B. **DB:** I'm sorry to labour this point but it's quite important. The photographs taken when you were wearing a red dress, did you know he was taking photographs of you at that time at all?

**JN:** Yes. Some of them; yes.

**DB:** Yes, so there were a number of photographs of you wearing a dress, some of which you knew about and others you didn't.

**JN:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. Then I think we move on until you start work for him. Very shortly after you started working for Mr McCrea, did you go with him and a number of others to the Sinn Féin summer school in Cork?

**JN:** Yes, with Connor Clements, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and, obviously, Basil. I was invited after a week of working for him to go to the Sinn Féin summer school, which was being hosted in Cork.

C. **DB:** OK. And was there an incident there after you'd all been out for a meal?

**JN:** Yes. The first night that we were there at the summer school, we were invited by Sinn Féin to come out and have drinks with them. I was uncomfortable when we were all piling into the car and there wasn't enough room for all of us, I guess. There were five of us and only four seats, so I think I wanted to sit on [REDACTED] lap but [REDACTED] and Basil kept fighting over me sitting on their laps and they were both trying to get me to sit on their laps but I think I sat on [REDACTED] lap in the end.

**DB:** OK. Then I think you needed a key to get into the hotel, is that right?

**JN:** Yes, and then we were trying to get into the hotel and somebody was looking for the key and found out it was behind me and he grabbed my butt.

**DB:** When you say "he", was that Mr McCrea?

A. JN: Yes, Mr McCrea. I was so shocked and I didn't know what to do. There were other people around, so I felt uncomfortable about making an issue of it. So, I thought, OK, I will go straight up to the hotel room to talk to [REDACTED] about it. I was sharing a room with her. So, I told her, and she assured me that she would speak to Basil about it and that it would never happen again.

DB: And did anything like that ever happen again?

JN: No, there was no sexual kind of touching after that.

DB: OK. I think that same night you received was it a text from one of the other people there?

JN: Yes, [REDACTED] sent me a text asking me to join him in his hotel room.

DB: And I think you didn't respond to that at all.

B. JN: It wasn't — I mean, I wouldn't have responded to it anyway but I didn't even receive it until the morning.

DB: Ah, right. Presumably before you came to work in Northern Ireland, you had to get a visa?

JN: Yes.

DB: Is it necessary, when applying for a visa, to give details of the employment you're going to have if you get into the UK?

JN: In my case, because I was applying for a UK *[inaudible]* visa, it wasn't mandatory, but I wanted to do whatever I could to help my case, so Basil McCrea sent them a letter saying that he would hire me and that I was going to work for him and he said exactly what my wage would be.

C. DB: Yes. After you arrived in the UK, was there some dispute about the amount of pay you were to get?

JN: Yes. I think I was about two weeks into working there, when he sat me down — I don't know if it was two weeks, maybe it was in the first week, I can't really remember — but anyway, he sat me down and talked to me about what my wages should be.

I thought he was going to give me a certain wage. I had only saved up enough in my bank account knowing that I would be paid this amount coming into it because that is what he promised. Then he tried to haggle me down to I think it was £90 a week.

DB: Ninety pounds per week. OK.

JN: I told him that just to survive and to pay rent and for my food, I would need at least £150 — I think it was £150 — and he said, "All right, £150", which was way under the minimum wage.

- A.** Then because this was the only job I had, and I didn't want to offend this guy who had brought me in, and I had nobody else to go to, I didn't want to argue or make a fuss, so I just accepted it.

**DB:** But, in fact, you were paid through the Assembly payroll, weren't you?

**JN:** Well, yes, because he filled out how much I am getting paid.

**DB:** But, you see, I had access to the Assembly payroll and it shows you receiving the minimum wage.

**JN:** No, I was not receiving the minimum wage.

**DB:** OK. Was there also a — Had Mr McCrea said anything to you about accommodation when you came to Ireland?

**JN:** Sorry, could you just repeat what you said before because maybe I heard you wrong? Did you say that I was receiving the minimum wage?

- B.** **DB:** Well, all I can say is that according to the records, you were receiving the minimum wage. That could be because the records are wrong.

**JN:** No, no, no. Let me explain that. So, how he does it is he says that I am working a certain amount of hours in the week. He says I work, I don't know —

**DB:** I think it was 37 on the records.

**JN:** Is that before November?

**DB:** That was in April, I think. I'm afraid I don't have them in front of me but when I looked at them, I think it was in April.

**JN:** Because any time before September 2013, I was getting paid way under the minimum wage, because he would put on the payroll that I was only working whatever it was — about 15 hours per week or something like that — and then he would pay me the minimum according to that. But he would always tell me that my job was 24/7, so I was always on call. I was working 35, 40 hours a week, and then he was paying me for whatever, 15 or 20, something like that.

- C.** **DB:** OK.

**JN:** That's how he made it work with the Assembly because he would say I am a part-time worker.

**DB:** OK. That makes sense. Then we were going to deal with accommodation. Had Mr McCrea said he would fix accommodation for you?

**JN:** Yes. He said — he promised me accommodation, and I told him several times that I would sort it out and not to worry about it. He promised me, "No, no, no. Don't worry, I'll find you a good place to live in a safe area, a great place with students", and all that kind of stuff.

When it came down to it, I think it was the day before I was supposed to arrive in Ireland, and he did not have any place for me to live.



A. Then I was supposed to — He asked me if I would go and live with [REDACTED] who I didn't know, and her family.

DB: I think, as it happens, that worked out quite well.

JN: Yes.

DB: But it wasn't what you were expecting.

JN: No, it wasn't. Then, in the end, I had to find a place of my own anyway, so it was stressful enough when you have to come over on your own but to then have to live with a family that you don't know.

It could have worked out for the worse; he said that he had a permanent place for me to stay and he didn't.

DB: OK.

B. JN: So, I basically had to arrive and then figure it out on my own anyway.

DB: OK. The next thing I want to ask you about is something that happened during the World Police and Fire Games when they were held in Belfast in August of 2013. Did you, along with Mr McCrea, meet members of the Canadian team?

JN: Yes, we went to the opening ceremony for the World Police and Fire Games, and I introduced myself to the men's Canadian hockey team and befriended them and I had been spending time with them when they were there.

DB: Was there an occasion during the games that you ended up on a Saturday night in Lavery's with Mr McCrea?

JN: Yes, that was not on my invitation. I did not want him there and I told him that I didn't want him there. But Kirsty McClay, who I was with, basically, when I told him that I didn't want him there, he was kind of trying to convince us that he was cool enough to come and that he wanted to be there, and then Kirsty basically gave in, and said, "All right, you can join us".

C. DB: OK.

JN: So, he came to Lavery's with us and kinda hung around. It was a very weird. I felt so guilty [inaudible]

DB: Did anything improper happen or did you just feel very uncomfortable having him there?

JN: Yes, I was uncomfortable and I felt it was inappropriate and unprofessional.

DB: Then I think in January of last year — [REDACTED] ?

JN: Yes, January 2014.

DB: And I understand that you told [REDACTED] about that.

JN: Yes. We were talking about it when renegotiating my salary.

A.

B.

**JN:** No, I didn't hear them telling other people but, from my experience, you are not with a very honest person that he cared a lot about, you know, me coming over and she wasn't like a person *[inaudible]* acknowledgement.

**DB:** OK.

**JN:** I felt *[inaudible]*.

**DB:** OK.

**JN:** She wouldn't have told me that because she knew it would hurt me. She *[inaudible]*

C. **DB:** Was there an incident when Mr McCrea was carrying out a radio interview?

**JN:** Yes, he was on a phone interview, and someone was talking on the phones at the same time. I didn't think anything of it. I didn't actually know he was on an interview. I just thought he was on the phone to someone. I went on the phone ordering a taxi, and to shush me he threw a baseball at me quite hard and it hit me. He wanted me to get out of the room or whatever.

Later, I think right afterwards, he did apologise and then I honestly can't remember. I just remember that, the next day, he called me into the office. I thought I was getting into trouble for something and I was basically getting into trouble for messing up his interview and was being scolded for messing up his interview.

**DB:** I know it's very difficult at this time. Do you have any idea when that incident took place? Was it after or before the Police and Fire Games?

A. JN: Sorry, could you repeat that?

DB: Sorry, was that baseball incident before or after the Police and Fire Games?

JN: Oh, that happened after the Police and Fire Games.

DB: OK. Is there anything else about Mr McCrea's conduct towards you that you think would help me with my investigation?

JN: Honestly, a lot of it would be speculation on my part and rumours that I heard, so I don't feel that it's fair to say any of that.

DB: OK.

JN: All I know that, as a young girl going there, he did make jokes about me sleeping around and made fun of me in front of other people. That made me very uncomfortable.

B. I remember one incident [*inaudible*] when he made comments in front of, I think it was Connor Clements, and another guy that I didn't know that had some kind of association with Basil about me sleeping with the whole Canadian hockey team.

DB: Was that the Canadian hockey team?

JN: From the World Police and Fire Games.

DB: Yes.

JN: I did not reveal anything about my life or anything. It was all just speculation. It was embarrassing and unprofessional.

DB: Yes.

JN: There were lots of little incidents like that through my time there.

C. DB: OK. Can I ask you, then, just about Mr McCrea's conduct to others? Can you bear in mind that I only really want to hear about what you yourself saw or heard, not what other people have told you happened?

There was a man called Alan Patterson working for part of the time you were there, wasn't there?

JN: Yes, there was.

DB: Did you see or hear any conduct of Mr McCrea towards Mr Patterson that you thought was unacceptable?

JN: Mr McCrea towards Alan Patterson? Not directly towards him. In my experience, Alan Patterson would say that he was being treated by Basil but I never witnessed much of their one-on-one.

DB: OK. Then Jamie Mackrell, did you ever see any conduct of Mr McCrea towards Mr Mackrell that you thought was unacceptable?

A. JN: I wasn't employed until a couple of weeks after Jamie Mackrell had left.

DB: OK, so you wouldn't have seen anything, then. Connor Clements, was he there when you were there?

JN: Yes, he was. Honestly, it is hard to remember now but I — The whole thing for us with Connor Clements was that Connor dedicated so much of his time. He was never paid for any of the work that he did with NI21.

The way that Basil spoke to him was quite awful. He often demanded that he would be there and, if he wasn't there or if he couldn't make it, he would give Connor a hard time. He promised that he would be paid and never paid him.

I, personally, wasn't involved in many of the interactions with Connor and Basil but I do know about that. That's all I know about what happened in their relationship.

B. DB: OK. Nigel Macauley was there at the same as you, wasn't he?

JN: Who?

DB: Nigel Macauley.

JN: I don't know who that is, sorry.

DB: Wasn't there some trouble with the NI21 youth Twitter account?

JN: Could you say the name one more time?

DB: Nigel Macauley. I may have got it wrong, so if it doesn't ring any bells with you, that's fine.

C. JN: What I'm hearing is [REDACTED]

DB: No, sorry. Nigel: N I G E L Macauley.

JN: Oh, Nigel. Yes, OK, sorry. Sorry, it is a bit fuzzy. Sometimes, I'm hearing things here. Yes, I know Nigel. Honestly, Nigel was treated very poorly. There was an incident with the NI21 youth account, where Nigel — we were about to set up a Twitter account, basically. I was in charge of the NI21 youth, so this was something that I wanted to get up and going but Basil kept telling me, "Wait for it, wait for it, wait for it."

As a result, Nigel thought he was being smart or funny or something and decided to start up his own NI21 youth Twitter account. Basically, he just started writing things. He wasn't actually employed by the party at this point. He was just some guy who knew Basil. It was his kind of way of, I don't know. It was ridiculous. He was trying to teach Basil a lesson, teach NI21 a lesson that they should have done this Twitter account a long time ago, which I personally was very upset about because it was my job to do that. I was very angry at him about it because he kind of made us look stupid.

**A. DB:** You were angry at Nigel?

**JN:** Yeah, I was mad at Nigel; I wasn't mad at Basil. As a result of that, Basil became distrusting of Nigel. But Nigel was really good at knowing about elections, specifically all kinds of election stats and polling and all that. He was a real expert at that.

So, John McCallister really wanted him on our team, so John McCallister said, "Hey, I'll take him on my payroll". Anyway, as a result, I can't give you a specific situation because there were so many events where Basil was actually yelling at Nigel or ignoring him or being rude to him.

I think that Basil was just hoping that he could be so awful and so rude to Nigel that eventually Nigel would just quit and leave.

**B. DB:** Just to be clear, is that what Nigel has told you or is that what you heard yourself?

**JN:** I witnessed –

**DB:** OK.

**JN:** I witnessed many situations where Nigel was treated poorly. You know what, I never really liked Nigel that much, so even in spite of my not really liking him that much, to see anybody being treated like that, you would feel uncomfortable being in the same room.

**DB:** Karen Tabahe was working for Basil throughout the time you were there, is that right?

**C. JN:** Yes. Karen Tabahe had been working for Basil for a long time, long before me. I had actually originally met her when I came over on the young ambassador programme. She was a really lovely lady.

But when I came over the second time to come work for Basil, it was clear that Basil was growing tired of her. He would actually say that she wasn't that sharp and he would say really awful things about her in the office to his employees. You know, he just keeps her on because she needs a job, she would be lost without him or she couldn't keep things together or wasn't organised enough.

It was humiliating for her knowing that he was saying all these things about her. I had seen him yell at her on a couple of occasions in the office.

**DB:** OK. Finally, Ashleigh Murray.

**JN:** Ashleigh Murray. Basil and Ashleigh, honestly I — When did Ashleigh leave? October 2013? Before that, she would go out with Basil whenever he was out of the office. She was out of the office with him for the most part until she moved out to — Where was his office?

A. DB: To Lisburn, was it?

JN: Yeah. Until she moved out to that office, she was pretty much by his side the whole time, especially when I came in. She was constantly in and out of the office with him, so I really didn't see much of their interactions.

I did, however, hear from Basil that she wasn't very smart and he kinda had to help her out because she had no education, and all that kind of stuff. Honestly, anything else that went around in the office was mostly speculation, I guess.

DB: OK. You'll be pleased to know that we're very nearly at the end. How did you come to be involved in the Carecall investigation?

JN: Basically, what happened was John McCallister — OK, what initially happened was, Ashleigh came out and said that she had been *[inaudible]* by Basil, which I think lots of people in the office had already suspected, because she was cooperating in it or that it was something that she was not comfortable with. Anyway, something was going on.

B. OK, when she came out, Peter — what's his name, Hutchinson —

DB: Yes.

JN: — and Fiona McAteer were in the office with me. I had already spoken to Fiona about the incident in Cork, and Peter was kinda flipping out, and I think he said, "Is it speculation, is it true, what's going on?"

There was a call from someone that John McCallister knew, saying that there were rumours going around that there was another woman or something that had been abused by Basil, another girl who had been abused by Basil.

So, John McCallister and Peter were trying to figure out whether it was true or not. I was uncomfortable saying anything. So then Peter was kinda freaking out, saying, "Look, I don't want to work for a guy like this. I have no idea if it's true or not." And Fiona was kinda like, "Jacquelyn, I feel like you should tell them."

C. I was there in the office and I told Peter. Then John came in and I told John. And then John made a decision to go and say to Basil that he should either resign or — Oh, no, he doesn't need to resign; I think he needed to do a full Carecall investigation just to make sure that all the employees were in a safe situation and that, if the employees were lying about the abuse, that he'd find out.

So, John encouraged me to get involved, just for my own kinda peace of mind or just for my own therapy, I suppose. Then I did; I did it mostly — At that point, I was under so much stress. [REDACTED] had threatened to come out to a magazine about it as well. He was also threatening to put out a fake story about Basil [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

So, I was feeling a lot of stress at that point, [REDACTED] I just wanted to go home; I wanted to leave. John said, "You know, this might help", *[inaudible]* so I went to the Carecall therapy sessions as well. Yes, so that's why I got involved.



**A. DB:** OK. Before you got involved with Carecall, had you received text messages from Ashleigh Murray?

**JN:** Yes, Ashleigh also urged me to get involved but, you know, it wasn't because of Ashleigh that I got involved. Ashleigh had very little influence over me. I was friendly with her. I didn't want to get involved in anything that she was getting involved in in the news, in anything like that. I wasn't up for having my face plastered, you know.

**DB:** Yes. In these text messages, did Ashleigh ask you for your help in digging up dirt on Basil?

**JN:** You cut out there. I couldn't hear a word.

**DB:** Sorry. In these text messages, did Ashleigh ask for your help to dig up dirt on Basil?

**B. JN:** Yeah, I'm sure she did, and I said if I found anything, that I would — I think I gave her something in the end; I don't remember what it was, but, yes.

**DB:** In any event, what you told Carecall: you were sticking to what was the truth and not going beyond that.

**JN:** I told Carecall what? I couldn't hear that.

**DB:** Yes. I'm sorry. I've got to play devil's advocate from time to time —

**JN:** No, that's absolutely fine. I can't hear you, so if you could just repeat what you said.

**DB:** Sure. If Mr McCrea's conduct to you was as bad as you say it was —

**JN:** Yes.

**C. DB:** — why did you stay working for him until June 2014?

**JN:** Because I had taken a year off school. Because it would look bad. No, the reason why I stayed on for a full year was because a few months here would have looked like summer camp, and now, when I go to employers with this, they are very impressed by working for the Assembly and a politician for a year.



So, basically, there was a bunch of factors. In the end, I was really lucky because, come November 2013, that's when Basil said he would put me in charge of the youth, so I took that as an excuse to get out of the office.

**A.** I very seldom interacted with Basil in my day-to-day work after that. I was basically able to escape and go to Queen's every day or go to the University of Ulster every day and work with students, which was a lot better, being out of the office, and I was a lot happier. If I didn't have to deal with him specifically, then I was happy in my job.

**DB:** OK. Had someone told you that you had grounds for unfair dismissal? Sorry, for constructive dismissal?

**JN:** There was no dismissal; I quit. Does it say that I was fired?

**DB:** No, no. Did someone tell you that you could, in fact, claim that Mr McCrea's conduct was so bad that you were entitled to claim constructive dismissal?

**JN:** No, nobody told me that. I had no idea.

**DB:** OK. Is there anything else you think I should know in relation to the complaint?

**B.** **JN:** No. Honestly, it's been quite a while since I have been there, so I remember very little. The only thing I really remember is what you're repeating back to me.

**DB:** OK. The time is now 5.43 pm UK time, and I'll terminate the interview. I'll just explain to you what will happen now. I will have a transcript of this interview prepared, and, as soon as I can get that done, I'll email it to you.

If you think any bits of it are wrongly transcribed, or there may be bits that they can't make out, if you can remember what they are, you can suggest changes to it. I'll give you 14 days to do that. After that, the transcript is accepted as final.

I still have a small number of witnesses — I think about three — that I have to speak to. Once I've done that, I'll be putting together my report to the Committee, but I can't really give you an accurate estimate of when that will be. Is there anything you want to ask me?

**C.** **JN:** In terms of publishing it, is my name going to be made public?

**DB:** Your name will appear in my report to the Committee, along with the transcript of your evidence. That's because the Committee can overrule or decide not to accept my recommendations, so they have to be able to see all the evidence that I've based my decision on.

The Committee can remove individuals' names and other personal details.

**JN:** Can I put in a request for the Committee to do that? Is that possible? I know for your report you need to keep it in.

**DB:** I will certainly pass that on to the [REDACTED]. That's a guy called [REDACTED]. Are you content that I give him your email address?

**JN:** Yes, that would be great, thank you.

**DB:** OK. I will pass that on to [REDACTED] and remind him of it nearer the time. I'm sure he'll be in touch with you. That may well be possible, but it's really a matter for him and the Committee. I can't give you any guarantee on it.



**A. JN:** OK. I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

**DB:** Well, Jacquelyn, thank you very much. I'm sorry; it was my fault that this has gone on so long but thank you very much for all your help.

**JN:** Thank you for being so patient with me. I know I've kinda given you a bit of a runaround with trying to contact me.

**DB:** Not a problem. OK, look after yourself. Goodbye.

**JN:** Thank you, bye.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Conor Clements

**Date:** 20 January 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED] Notetaker  
Conor Clements

**Time Started:** 11.00 am

**Time Ended:** 11.33 am

- A.** **DB:** Thank you very much for coming. I think I explained in the notice that I was taking evidence on oath at this. Are you content to take an oath on the Bible or do you prefer to affirm?
- CC:** The Bible's fine.
- DB:** Would you take the book in your right hand and read the words of the oath.
- CC:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.
- DB:** Thank you very much.
- CC:** OK.
- B.** **DB:** And can you just confirm that, before coming today, you received a notice from me and a note outlining the procedure for the investigation and for this interview and drawing your attention to a number of offences?
- CC:** Yeah, I got the letter.
- DB:** I hope this won't take us very long. Can I just try and see if I understand the background? My understanding is that you first worked as a volunteer for NI21 a few weeks before the official launch of the party.
- CC:** Yeah, yeah.
- DB:** So, I suppose at that stage it wasn't for NI21 but it became NI21.
- CC:** It was in the run-up to the launch of the party, yeah.
- C.** **DB:** At that time, you didn't want to work on a full-time basis for them because you were working for your father.
- CC:** No, I was working for my father and there was no job available.
- DB:** Right. What was the nature of your work with your father?
- CC:** I was communications director and doing the website and doing office work.
- DB:** OK.
- CC:** It was an insulation business.
- DB:** OK. Did you then, from time to time, do work on a voluntary basis for NI21 until around the time of the election?
- CC:** Yeah, yeah. I was doing voluntary work, you know, doing media work, videos, photographs, social media on and off as and when I could, yeah, up until the elections.

- A. DB: I mean, just to give me some idea of the amount of work you were doing, I mean it wasn't a case of doing two days a week or anything like that. It was just when there were events needing covering and you were free, you went and did them.

CC: Well, yeah, but I mean there was always something happening, you know, so there was —

DB: So, how much time per week on average do you think it would have been?

CC: It would be hard to put a figure on because, you know, there would be some weeks you could be there nearly every day or working on something every day, and there would be days when there was nothing. It just depended on, you know, like if the conference or whatever was coming up, you know, you would be working all week and all of that.

- B. If there was an event like we had at the 'Talks Back' in Newcastle, that was a full weekend. But I mean there was always something. You were always having to run to meetings and things as well and attend different events.

DB: Did that work take you all over Northern Ireland?

CC: Yeah; sometimes. You know, we went to Cork. I went to — was it Wicklow or Wexford? — Wicklow, you know, for different things as well.

DB: So, did you spend much time actually at Stormont?

CC: I did spend a fair bit of time at the start, you know in the summertime, but it got to the stage where it was becoming a bit too demanding of my time to come up to Stormont. I just would have done whatever work I could either at home or attending whatever events.

- C. I mean, I was asked initially when [REDACTED] left, Basil phoned me up and offered me a job at Stormont taking over from her role, in which I came up and I did work for a few days but there was never any talk of money. Then I just thought, well I'm not coming; I wasn't going to do it. I was certainly not going to drive to Stormont every day for nothing.

DB: At a later stage, was there an offer made of £500 per month?

CC: Yeah. There was an offer made, probably around Christmastime 2013: £500 a month for two half days a week at Stormont, which I refused on a number of grounds, namely —

Well, initially, the reason was the two half days I just knew weren't going to be half days because I have seen the time you were called into a meeting for half an hour and you would be there to midnight; he probably wouldn't let you go.

So, even working it out and doing the economics of it, it wasn't worth my while to spend two days a week driving up and down to Stormont. But I mean, I suppose the main reason I didn't take that job was I was warned off by most of Basil's staff not to.

A. DB: OK. Well, I don't want to hear what other people said to you because that's really for their evidence, not yours.

CC: Well, I can tell you I was warned by Fiona, Peter –

DB: Yes but –

CC: — Karen and Ashleigh not to take that job.

DB: OK, but, of course, you don't know whether what they were telling you was true or not.

CC: Well, I'm telling you from what they told me, I'm telling you the reason why I didn't take the job, so that's why I didn't take it.

B. DB: But, at a later stage, was there an offer of £1,000 for work in connection with the election?

CC: At a later stage, there was an offer from [REDACTED]. She said there was enough money there to pay me £600 a month in the run-up to the elections. Now, she told me that on her birthday, so I can look up the date if it's needed, but it was on her birthday because we met.

DB: OK.

CC: The £1,600: they kept trying to have meetings with Basil about it but he would never turn up, it never happened. Eventually, it was sometime, I think in April last year, we eventually went in for a meeting —

No, sorry, I need to go back. We had a meeting at [REDACTED] house. I was there along with some of the potential council candidates in preparation for the launch of the council campaigns, but also [REDACTED]'s campaign.

C. When all the council candidates left, [REDACTED] campaign team were there. We were plotting out basically what everybody would be doing in the campaign. You know, I was aware there was going to be a lot of work to it, and I said I cannot do this for no money because, by this stage, my father had stopped paying me because I was running to Stormont too much. He said he couldn't do that, so I had no income.

So, I said to [REDACTED] "Listen, I'm happy to do this but I can't do it unless I'm going to get paid." She made a flippant remark in front of the other council candidates, "If you want Connor to do a video, buy him a pint."

I thought, no, it's not going to work like that. It's not that I was in it for the money, but when you're at the stage where it's costing you money to go places and do things, and you don't have an income stream when everybody else on the team does, I wasn't going to do it.

So, she asked me that night to put in an invoice to Basil McCrea for £1,000, which I did. It was ignored. I sent it in again and it was ignored. The invoice was never paid, never even acknowledged.

- A.** I was still asked to come along and do different bits and pieces, like, for example, "Oh, could you come along to the Knock hustings at the Presbyterian church? It's the hustings, so could you film that? Basil is coming, and we will talk to him about the money and get that sorted."

So, down I would come and would film the event. Where's Basil? Nowhere to be seen. You try to talk to [REDACTED] about money; doesn't want to know. All she cares about was how did I do.

Anyway, so we eventually pinned it down and we met Basil — I just want to check because I may have had a note of that somewhere. I can't remember the date but it was a Friday anyway, to meet him at half two.

He showed up at about 4 o'clock or half three or something, and I walked into the room and he walked out. It was just me and [REDACTED]. She said, "What's the craic?" I said, "[REDACTED] you know, you're looking me to do all this work. Have you the money or not?" "No." I said, "I'm very sorry, I cannot do this work. I'm happy to support and do whatever I can but I cannot commit to doing all this work".

- B.** We were talking like at least a solid month of working on a European election campaign. That's not something you can sort of do a half day here and there. That was going to be block solid. So, that was that. So, there was no money, so I said, "No, I'm very sorry."

But I did actually do more work for them since then.

**DB:** Just to be clear on the details, this invoice for £1,000, that was for work done for the party.

**CC:** Yeah. Well, I was told to put an invoice in for £1,000 to cover my work, yeah.

**DB:** But it was for work, not for Mr McCrea as an MLA but for NI21, and that's why [REDACTED] was, because she was an official of NI21.

**CC:** No, I was told to put — The invoice was made out to Basil.

- C.** **DB:** Yes, but the work was for the party.

**CC:** The work was for the party, but I was told that I would have to do some work for Basil because it was coming out of his OCA, or OCE. Is it OCA or OCE? One or the other, I don't know.

**DB:** It's OCE.

**CC:** His office costs allowance or expenditure.

**DB:** But it didn't, in the end.

**CC:** What?

**DB:** It never came out of anywhere because it wasn't paid.

**CC:** Well, it was never paid.

A. DB: OK. Can I just — bear with me — I just want to ask you about a donation by a party supporter that apparently never reached the party. What can you tell me about that?

CC: Well, I believe you're talking about [REDACTED]

I tie into that a fair bit because the donation was in relation to a mobile phone app and iPad app that tied in together all of the online content that NI21 was producing. So, that included the website, Facebook and Twitter all merged into one app.

The reason that came about was I built the app back in, I think, August 2013 as a sort of prototype to see what we can do with this. [REDACTED] who I was friendly enough with, I showed him the app because he was complaining that he wasn't hearing anything from the party.

By this stage, he'd already given £5,000 to help launch the party and he was concerned that he wasn't hearing anything and wasn't being kept up to date on what was going on, what was happening.

B. I said, "Listen, try this app. Everything that happens goes through the app." At this stage, it wasn't a final version; it was a preview. I could give him a code for it, but it wasn't freely available for distribution.

He loved the app. He thought it was great and thought everybody needed to get it. Every time I saw him, he said, "What about this app. We need to get this. This is something we need."

So, [REDACTED] offered to pay for the app. He met with Basil before Christmas at the Stormont Hotel. He told me they had lunch at the Stormont Hotel.

DB: Were you there on that occasion?

CC: No, he told me.

DB: No. But you weren't there.

C. CC: No.

DB: Well, I don't want to hear, then, anything about what —

CC: Sorry, but do you want to know what happened?

DB: No. I'm only interested in what would be admissible evidence, and you can't give evidence —

CC: Well, I can tell you what happened.

DB: No, you can't give me evidence about what someone else has told you happened. It's only what you saw or heard.

CC: Well, I can tell you that —

DB: Well, not —



A. CC: — there was a cheque given to Basil McCrea.

DB: Now, do you know?

CC: Yes, I can have the cheque number.

DB: From your own knowledge, how do you know it was given to Basil McCrea?

CC: Because it was posted. [REDACTED] told me.

DB: Yes but from your own knowledge?

CC: The cheque was cashed. It was written out to Basil McCrea. It was sent to his house in [REDACTED] — not [REDACTED], sorry, [REDACTED]. The cheque was cashed.

DB: This is all what you've been told.

B. CC: [REDACTED] told me that Basil said it would be easier for the cheque to be made out direct to Basil.

DB: But just —

CC: I'm sorry but this is —

DB: No, just restrict yourself. Imagine you were in court and you can't give hearsay evidence. The only thing you can tell me is what you saw or heard yourself.

CC: Well, I can tell you what [REDACTED] — what I saw and heard from [REDACTED].

DB: No, no. While that might be interesting, it wouldn't be a matter that I could have regard to. If I want [REDACTED] evidence on that, then I will see [REDACTED].

So, what, from your own knowledge, did you ever see the cheque?

CC: No, no.

C. DB: Do you, from your own knowledge, as opposed to what someone else has told you, know whether there ever was a cheque?

CC: I need to talk to you about this app, because it was in January that [REDACTED] contacted me —

DB: No, perhaps you can just answer the question.

CC: I'm sorry, but no I don't agree with this, now, because —

DB: I'm afraid it's not a question of whether you agree. Do you, from your own knowledge, know anything about whether Mr McCrea received this cheque or are you relying on what you have been told?

CC: I know that he cashed it, because [REDACTED] went to the bank and the bank was able to confirm that the cheque was cashed.



A. DB: Have you spoken to the bank?

CC: I spoke to [REDACTED]

DB: OK, I think that's all we need to proceed on that.

CC: No, there's more to that because, when it again came to [REDACTED] was putting pressure on me about as to where this app is, I said, "Well, we don't have the money." He then told me that he gave Basil the money.

So, I contacted Basil, and I said — at this stage, it was late January, and the app was reduced in price — I asked Basil, I said to him there was a text message that the app had come down in price. He said, "What app?" I said, "The one that [REDACTED] gave you the money for." He said, "[REDACTED] forgot."

B. I went back to [REDACTED] and said, "Basil said we never got the money." [REDACTED] then was — Well, he went then and found out that — He started then questioning his own belief, did he send the cheque. He found out by going back to the bank that, yes, he did. The cheque was cashed. Then there was a chain of events after that in relation to trying to get the story straight.

DB: Well, that's all interesting, but, in any event, this was an app for NI21.

CC: Yeah.

DB: Not for Mr McCrea as an MLA.

CC: Well, as Basil McCrea was the MLA and he was the party leader, so —

DB: But it was for NI21.

C. CC: Yeah.

DB: You see, there is a big, important difference. Now, can I ask you about —

CC: No, I'm sorry, hang on. Basil McCrea is an MLA first and foremost, and he is Basil McCrea MLA, leader of NI21, so I don't really see much of a distinction.

DB: Well, the distinction is very clear. The Code of Conduct, which is what I am investigating allegations about, is only concerned with conduct of Members or misconduct of Members in their capacity as an MLA. It doesn't cover, for example, things they do in their private life or things they do as a party leader.

That's not just my interpretation; it's the interpretation of the Committee on Standards and Privileges.

**A. CC:** It's an odd one, that, because he's the –

**DB:** Well –

**CC:** — party leader because he's an MLA. He's the leader of NI21 because he's an MLA.

**DB:** That would be entirely consistent with, as I understand it, the approach taken at Westminster, both in the Commons and the Lords, and at the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. So, there's nothing unusual about it.

In the time you were doing this work that we've talked about, did you come into contact with Ashleigh Murray?

**CC:** Yeah.

**B. DB:** Where was she working at the time when you were in contact with her?

**CC:** Initially, here at Stormont and then she got moved to Lisburn.

**DB:** And when were you last in contact with Ashleigh?

**CC:** I spoke to her over Christmas.

**DB:** I understand that, in November 2013, you received a text from Ashleigh to say that she'd quit.

**CC:** Yeah.

**DB:** And did that surprise you at the time?

**C. CC:** At the time, not really, because I knew she'd had trouble with Basil from, I would say, probably September-time. I met her in Lisburn one day. When she was moved out there, I was in Lisburn and I contacted and we met for a coffee. It was only really then that I realised there was problems with the way she was being treated.

**DB:** And that was from what she told you.

**CC:** Yeah.

**DB:** When she told you about Basil's conduct — and I don't want you to tell me what she said because that will come from her — but when she told you on that occasion, did that come as a surprise to you?

**CC:** Certain things did, yeah. Initially I phoned her because I wanted to see if she was maybe going to change her mind, if it was an erratic decision, but after the conversation I had with her, I was glad that she left, and wished her all the best and was happy that she'd gone.

**DB:** Can I ask you how did you come to be involved in the Carecall investigation?

- A. CC: Fiona McAteer asked me to be involved. In fact, you asked that in the letter. It was a text message from Fiona the night before: "Random question. Do you want to go to Carecall just about the different things you've seen and heard and how Basil treated you?"

I said, "Yes".

DB: OK.

CC: That was the night before. That was a Thursday, I think, and we went down on a Friday, but I wasn't seen that day because there were too many people in to give evidence, so I was seen a week later.

DB: OK. Were you — No, sorry, I don't want to go in that direction. Just before the Carecall investigation started up, had there been concerns around about rumours about Mr McCrea?

- B. CC: Yeah, there was, there was.

DB: And do you know who was behind these rumours?

CC: Well, there was rumours circulating from [REDACTED] about he had been approached by two or three women, I think it was, and they had complaints about Basil.

DB: Were you anything to do with the rumours?

CC: No, only in that he told me about them and I told him to pass them on, pass on the information, as I felt it was the right thing to do.

DB: Yes, oh yes, no criticism of that.

CC: Rather than try and cover it up, as what I believed subsequently happened.

- C. DB: I appreciate you may want to tell me things that other people have said to you, but is there anything else from what you personally saw and heard that you think would assist me in my investigation?

CC: Em, sorry, I —

DB: Did you see, for example, Mr McCrea — see or hear Mr McCrea do anything that you regard as relevant to my investigation, other than what you've told me about?

CC: I mean, I don't really know what line your investigation is going down, but I could tell you near enough on every occasion I was ever in his company, there was always something that just made me feel uncomfortable or just not right.

You know, there was just the general treatment of staff. The only way to describe him is a bully. I have seen the way he would talk to Ashleigh in front of people or Jacquelyn.

- A.** I can remember one day going to Jordanstown. There was an open day, and NI21 had a stall at it. There must have been some confusion in the set-up of the day and maybe late getting set up or whatever. Anyway, I arrived down and was emailed to take my camera, as I was told to do.

I can remember Basil and I went for a cup of tea because he wanted to talk about [REDACTED] and the possibility of getting a job or providing me with work. I remember sitting in the café with Basil. Jordanstown is like a little mall and has got sandwich bars and coffee shops.

**DB:** OK.

**CC:** We were just sitting opposite, like you and I are now, and he was sitting looking out the window at all these young girls going past and, like, making comments about them, and I turned round to him and I said, "You know, you're like an effing pervy 14-year-old. Would you stop it?" "Oh, I can't help it." This type of thing.

- B.** I then remember Ashleigh came walking past, and I rapped the window at her. "Oh no, don't, don't. I don't want to see her. I don't want to talk to her."

It was shortly after that, I think everything was packed up, and we had Suzanne Chalkley, Jacquelyn Neglia — I think it was Neglia; I can't remember her name —

**DB:** Yes.

**CC:** — and Ashleigh came round, and he tore into Jacquelyn in front of everybody about, you know, the way she'd mucked up the day, and if it wasn't for him, the day would've been ruined. I just thought this was really uncomfortable and embarrassing for her, but the fact that it was done in front of people. You know, I found it just really belittled her.

So, that was once occasion where I witnessed that specifically.

**DB:** Yes.

- C.** **CC:** It's one thing, I think, if you can have a word with someone maybe behind closed doors, but this was in Jordanstown café, you know. Anyway, that one always stuck in my mind; just that sequence of events.

In terms of, eh — I remember even the very first day I was in his office at Stormont. I was asked to go and pick out photographs for the new website that was being built. He came bursting in the door. Fiona was there and there was somebody else there. You could see how they changed completely. There was like a fear had come over them, but I didn't know what was going on —

**DB:** Sure.

**CC:** — because I'd never been there before. You only know Basil from what you see on the TV. He came in, and someone had got into an argument with him on Twitter and he demanded that we all set up accounts and attack this person.

- A.** I said, "Basil, just leave it. People on Twitter will say whatever they want. Why do you let that annoy you?" But he was furious. You could see the fear in the other girls' eyes. It got to the stage where we were just sort of glad when you came up to Stormont and he wasn't there. You were sort of relieved because you were able to go out and do your work and not be in fear of anybody coming in and shouting at you or shouting at someone else. You know, just being in that environment and within that energy.

Em, let's see, I'm trying to think of a specific one.

**DB:** Despite that, you still continued to do work.

**CC:** I continued to do work but I said I wouldn't be working for him. In fact, it was after the [REDACTED] money thing, where he told the executive that he didn't get any money, I remember actually having a conversation with John McCallister, and he said, "Well, are you going to work for him?" and I said, "Not a chance." I said, "I'll not be taking anything to do with him and I'll certainly not be taking any money off him."

- B.** You know, I'd heard rumours of money or whatever being handed over in the past, people had warned me about him, but I said I'll find out for myself; I'm not just going to take someone's word. But then, when I witnessed the way [REDACTED]'s £1,000 all played out, I thought I'm not taking anything to do with money here because there's something not right about it.

At the time, I thought at some point I'm going to be called up in front of some tribunal over finances, and I thought, I'm not doing it, you know. Forbye the fact that I wasn't happy in his company working for him, I was still happy to work for the party because I'd invested a lot of time and energy into the NI21 brand.

**DB:** Sure.

**CC:** There were other good people there at the time, but I just wouldn't work for him.

**DB:** OK. Well, thank you very much. That's been very helpful. The time is now 11.29, and we'll conclude the interview.

- C.** **CC:** Sorry, there was another thing, and I don't know whether it's relevant or not. I was present at a meeting with Nigel Macauley and [REDACTED] one night. Actually, it was a 'Women in Politics' event that we were filming at Queen's.

You know, Basil hated Nigel. It was so obvious, like the way he would, you know, speak to him and just shout down to him. It was just appalling.

**DB:** What did to say to Nigel at this meeting?

**CC:** He just completely belittled him. Everything Nigel would say, he would just belittle him. It got to the stage where, you know, the whole body language and everything. There was sort of an edge of violence about it. You thought he could physically lash out at him.

Anyway, I can't recall the whole conversation. They were having some meeting about the constitution. Anyway, I mean, it was just another example where I had seen him bully and harass staff.



- A. DB: Sorry, just to be clear: that meeting was about the constitution of NI21?
- CC: I think it was something to do with that.
- DB: Yes.
- CC: Now, there's another thing. I know you've said that you don't want to hear from what other people have said, but after the election, I was at an event and there was a guy there, [REDACTED], who worked in Basil's office for a while.
- DB: Well, if you're about to tell me what [REDACTED] said to you —
- CC: No, what I'll say to you is he worked there for a while, and he said to me that he witnessed workplace bullying towards Jacquelyn. I asked him to go to Carecall because, at this time, the Carecall thing was going on, and I don't think he was prepared to do it, but on two occasions, he said to me that he witnessed bullying towards Jacquelyn. His name is [REDACTED]. I don't know if you want to contact him. I don't know what went on because, by this stage —
- B. DB: Do you have any contact details for him?
- CC: I could get you them. I can get you the email or something if that's handy.
- DB: If you could.
- CC: All I'd say is, I begged him at the time because I'm the sort, like, if you see something, say something. That's why I was happy to go to Carecall.
- DB: Yes.
- CC: I mean, I was actually a bit disappointed. I thought he was big enough to say behind everybody's back that he saw it, and it was his words that it was workplace bullying towards Jacquelyn. He said, "Where is Jacquelyn?" He kept saying, "Where did she go? Is she OK?" — all this here.
- C. I wasn't aware too much of a lot of things that went on with Jacquelyn in terms of being bullied in the workplace. I was aware of an incident in Cork where Basil touched her and whatever and how that was sort of later dealt with, but I didn't realise that Jacquelyn was under so many difficulties, but [REDACTED] did.
- DB: Well, if you could send me contact details if you can get them.
- CC: Do you have an email that I can send you stuff?
- [REDACTED] Do you want it to send it to me?
- CC: Sorry, I just assumed —
- [REDACTED] Yes, you can send it to me, Connor. It's all small:  
[REDACTED]
- CC: OK, so you want his contact details. Well, I can get you an email. I don't know him.

**A.**     **DB:** OK, well that would be helpful.

**CC:** I know him to see, but he worked up with Basil for a while.

**DB:** OK, we'll try again: the time is now 11.33. Thank you very much.

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Connor Clements

**Date:** 3 August 2015

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Conor Clements

**Time Started:** 11.34 pm

**Time Ended:** 12.00 pm



A. **COMMISSIONER:** This is the further interview of Conor Clements, taking place in Room 283, Parliament Buildings on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015. The time is now 11.34. Present are Douglas Bain, the Commissioner for Standards, Conor Clements and [REDACTED] as a notetaker. Mr Clements, can I remind that you are still on oath.

B. **CLEMENTS:** Okay.

**COMMISSIONER:** And just for the record, can you confirm that you received a notice from me requiring your attendance here today?

C. **CLEMENTS:** Yes, on email.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes, but you received it?

**CLEMENTS:** Yes, yes.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** And along with that notice there was a note outlining the procedure for the investigation and for this interview?

**CLEMENTS:** Is this it?. No. [REDACTED]

E. **COMMISSIONER:** Sorry, could you speak up so we can get this on tape?

**CLEMENTS:** Sorry, that's all received I there. Just looking through my... the things that I am being asked of that came in this, the two envelopes.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, look, you have received from me, didn't you, when I sent you a copy of the transcript, the procedure for the interview?

**CLEMENTS:** Right, that would have been on email?

G. **COMMISSIONER:** No, I think it was sent by—

**McCAUGHLEY:** Yes, a hard copy, recorded delivery.

H. **COMMISSIONER:** —hard copy. Or is that another letter sent to your address that you haven't received?

A.

**McCAUGHLEY:** Is that something else?

**CLEMENTS:** This is all I have received from you.

B.

**McCAUGHLEY:** Yes, that was sent out last week.

**CLEMENTS:** And it was this, it came in this envelope, that's all it contained.

C.

**COMMISSIONER:** Right. Well, before you came last time, do you recall receiving a note outlining the procedure? Because you accepted at the start of the interview—

**CLEMENTS:** Back in January.

**COMMISSIONER:** Yes.

D.

**CLEMENTS:** Right, okay.

**COMMISSIONER:** You're willing to accept that?

E.

**CLEMENTS:** What was it again, sorry?

**COMMISSIONER:** Perhaps if you just listen to the question—

**CLEMENTS:** Yes, it's confusing here because of all these letters. I received this, this is what I received from last week.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** Now, if you just let me ask you a question then you answer it. Do you recall when you were required to attend before me in January you received a notice?

G.

**CLEMENTS:** Inviting me to come?

**COMMISSIONER:** The notice requiring you to come.

**CLEMENTS:** Yes.

H.

A. **COMMISSIONER:** And along with that there was a note outlining the procedure for the interview and giving details of various offences. Do you recall that?

**CLEMENTS:** Right. It may have been attached to it.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, the question was, do you recall it or not? The answer is either yes or no.

**CLEMENTS:** I'm sorry, I don't recall it, no.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** No, okay. Well, just in case it becomes important, let me remind you of the provisions then for this interview. I will ask questions and you are required by law to answer them unless you have a reasonable excuse for not answering them. You are not, for example, required to give any answer which would incriminate you in any criminal offence, such as phone hacking. Do you understand that?

D. **CLEMENTS:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** It is an offence for you to fail to answer the question or to give a false or misleading answer to it. Do you understand that?

E. **CLEMENTS:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And do you understand that because you are on oath, giving an answer which you know to be true... or which you think is untrue would be perjury?

F. **CLEMENTS:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** All right. Now, these are purely formalities I am required by the...that I am to go through at the start of an interview.

G. **CLEMENTS:** That's fine.

**COMMISSIONER:** Okay. Now, let's move to matters of substance. As I understand it from you, so as we have got it clear on the record, you didn't receive a letter from me shortly after 6<sup>th</sup> February?

H.

- A. **CLEMENTS:** That's right.
- COMMISSIONER:** Which includes a copy of the transcript of your interview?
- CLEMENTS:** That's right, yes.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** And you wrote to me, well, emailed me asking what had happened and as a result of that you were sent a copy of the transcript.
- CLEMENTS:** By email, yes.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Yes. And there was an exchange of emails but the one of significance is an email to me on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2015 from you in which you assert, and I quote, "I consider the typed transcript to be a sanitised version of the interview."
- D. **CLEMENTS:** Yes.
- COMMISSIONER:** Is that right?
- CLEMENTS:** That's right.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** What did you mean by when you said it was a "sanitised version"?
- CLEMENTS:** Well, given that the interviews are being recorded, you know, on this tape here, I consider that, as I have already said to you in an email, you know, primary evidence. You know, that is a 100 percent true, accurate record of what was said in the interview. The fact that these are destroyed, deleted, whatever, you know, even when the investigation is still ongoing, to me, you know, it's not only bad practice, I just think it's something... I just think it's not the right thing to do. To me, it just smacks of a cover up. You know, I don't know why you would destroy evidence like that. I mean, I don't know how you really conduct your interviews or your investigation but, as I understand, you carry out an investigation and then you present your findings to a committee at Stormont and, you know, all I can assume then is that they get is a typed up transcript that you have approved and if they wanted to go back and refer, say, to the interview, to the recording, you wouldn't be able to do that. So in that regard, it is sanitised. You know, I think as well, it's one thing when you see something in black and white, it takes away a lot of the tone from
- H.

A. what was actually said and the way things were said. You know, and I think that's an important thing for, you know, for me, coming to you as a witness to give evidence to help you with your investigation, but also for you as well. You know, when you look at the Belfast Telegraph front page where it's alleged that you have, you know, traumatised a witness, part of this investigation, to the point where she [REDACTED] cannot?) [REDACTED] come back, which is not willing to come back. You know, all I would say, it's just an allegation, but if those recordings are destroyed, you know, you're the ones that are left, you know, sort of hanging over your head. So, to me, I think the recordings are vital, that you keep them, you know, it's part of like Assembly business as well. Like everything is recorded in Hansard I am sure it probably goes off the Public Record Office and up there but, I mean, it's up to you as how you conduct your investigations but, to me, I just... you know, from that... that's what I mean by it being sanitised.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** Right. So under the normal meaning of suggesting a transcript was sanitised, you mean there was bits deliberately omitted?

E. **CLEMENTS:** Well, yes, it's that as well, yes. There could be bits omitted or things added in. I mean, from my own experience in the past I have had that happen in other scenarios and I always insisted a recording be made and I would have insisted on taking my own recording the first time round, only so that you had your own which, you know, I am really disappointed in fact. I just find it so bizarre that you would destroy a recording of an ongoing investigation. Now, I know it's said in the email that I had something like 14 days to respond whether anything was accurate or not which, you know, I didn't get that. You know, looking at that, the interview took place I think was on 20<sup>th</sup> February... no January.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** 20<sup>th</sup> January.

G. **CLEMENTS:** And then the transcript was apparently sent to me on the 6<sup>th</sup>, so there was a period of 17 days in between the original interview for which you have had to work on that transcript. So it's at the point you are happy for it to be sent to me. It comes to me, I don't get it. But the emails in that period of, say, 17 days, you know, there is going to be things that aren't going to be too fresh in my mind anyway. So at that point I would have been looking to come back to listen to that or you will get a copy of it. But I mean, it's up to you how you conduct your interviews but I would be

H.

A. suggesting that, you know, you don't destroy these things because it is part of the process.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, that's all very interesting and, as I have already told you, the process is being reviewed. But what I want to come back to is are you alleging now that material was left out of that transcript or do you accept that the transcript is accurate?

C. **CLEMENTS:** No, it's not accurate. It couldn't be accurate. Well, it's accurate in that that's what you have signed off, that's what you have approved, so in your mind it's accurate. To my mind, the only accurate recording of that event was on that recording device there, which has been destroyed.

**COMMISSIONER:** All right.

D. [Mobile rings]

**CLEMENTS:** Oh sorry. Sorry about that.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** All right. But are there specific things that you claim you said to me on 20<sup>th</sup> January that do not appear on the transcript? Or is it just that you are... because of the passage of time you cannot be certain that everything you said—

F. **CLEMENTS:** Well, no, I think I could be certain that everything I had said word for word is in that transcript. I mean, from my memory of that interview on the day, I mean, I have to say I don't think it was very useful in terms of like anything that I tried to raise you were just very adamant that you didn't want to hear certain things and you were shutting things down, you were going in other directions and, to me, I felt it—

**COMMISSIONER:** All right. Well—

G. **CLEMENTS:** See, you're doing it now.

**COMMISSIONER:** Now is your opportunity to tell me, taking however long you want, everything that you think I need to know from you about this investigation.

H.

A. **CLEMENTS:** Sorry, you can roll your eyes all you like, you know, I am here to help with your investigation.

**COMMISSIONER:** I know and I appreciate it and that's why I am giving you the opportunity to tell me whatever you want.

B. **CLEMENTS:** No, I don't think you do. Listen, can I have a look at the transcript, because I don't have a physical copy. I don't have a printer at home.

**COMMISSIONER:** There we are.

C. **CLEMENTS:** Thank you.

**COMMISSIONER:** Although I think it was spelling your name wrongly, for which I apologise.

D. **CLEMENTS:** Well, that's a common mistake.

**COMMISSIONER:** Can I ask you, Mr Connors, have you read the transcript before coming today?

E. **CLEMENTS:** I had a look over it on email last week.

**COMMISSIONER:** I mean, if you want time—

F. **CLEMENTS:** But I haven't got a... sorry, I haven't been able to print it off, I would only be able to look at it on the computer.

**COMMISSIONER:** If you need time to consider it we can adjourn and you can go away and read it in your own time and I can get on with work and then you can come back and tell me what—

G. **CLEMENTS:** Well, I could talk to you about additional things that have happened since, which I would like to talk about, I think it's important.

**COMMISSIONER:** Well, let's deal with the transcript first, about matters that you believe may have been omitted.

H.



A. **CLEMENTS:** Well, I don't know what... you know, right, there is specific things that I tried to raise with you in relation to what I believe was fraud involving [REDACTED] and money that was, you know, given to Basil and Basil then tried to lie... lied about it and said he never received it and then, I don't know, is that there? I think you did mention it. But I mean, you didn't want to hear. I mean, you know, you just if I recall you went down the route of if I didn't see physically see a cheque the cheque maybe didn't exist.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** I think, just to correct the position, but I have tried to make clear to you but you seem to have difficulty understanding, was that I didn't want to hear from you what other people said had happened that you hadn't heard yourself, because your evidence was not the best evidence of that matter. The best evidence was from them, in this case, [REDACTED]

C. **CLEMENTS:** Yes. Do you know there would have been other things that I would have heard, people have come to me and told me things. Things that happened to them, you know, and even that, you were trying to shut me down and you didn't hear [REDACTED] and I still felt that, you know, things that I would... people have come to me and told me, you know, to tell you that this is what I heard and for you then to go on and interview them. I'd have thought that would have been important.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, it would have been important to hear that you thought that [REDACTED] or Fiona whatever had further relevant information and, indeed, you did mention a person at the end of your interview whose name I have forgotten now—

E. **CLEMENTS:** [REDACTED], yes, and [REDACTED] rames.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** And you were going to provide me with details of that, contact details, but you haven't done so.

G. **CLEMENTS:** Right. Well, I don't have any contact details for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. So I never heard anything from you. [REDACTED] the week before last but, yes, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] approached me twice. I was in his company back last summer, the time he did work up in Basil's office as a volunteer. I'm not quite sure what he was doing. I think he was writing a blog or something. But he said he didn't witness... Well, his words "workplace" but aimed towards Jacqueline, Nadia, and he had

H.



A. concerns about her at that time. I don't know whether you have interviewed him or not.

**COMMISSIONER:** Well, I haven't been able to interview him because, as you will see recorded there, you agreed to send in his contact details—

B. **CLEMENTS:** Yes, this is the transcript that I got just over a week ago. So I will get you those contact details. I will try and find a way. I don't know him personally. I met him through my time with them in the 21, but he didn't hang about, and then I have seen him twice since and that's been about a year ago.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, do you wish time to consider the transcript and identify—

**CLEMENTS:** Well, I don't see how anything will identify anything that is missing. The only way to do that is if I had the recording so I don't see... it's a bit of a pointless exercise to be trying to identify bits that are missing. So if you wouldn't mind, could I continue on with other matters that happened since?

**COMMISSIONER:** By all means.

E.

F.

G.

H.

Letter Chambers/Murray 14 June 2012

Pages 10, 11 and 12 were redacted by the Committee.

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

**COMMISSIONER:** Now, what else do you want to tell me?

**CLEMENTS:** No, I have nothing else. Have you any questions for me?

H.

**COMMISSIONER:** No, I asked all the questions I needed to ask at our first interview.

A.

**CLEMENTS:** Okay.

**COMMISSIONER:** Thank you very much. The time is now exactly 12 noon and this interview is terminated.

B.

[Ends]

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

H.



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Fiona McAteer

**Date:** 18 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Fiona McAteer

**Time Started:** 15.37 pm

**Time Ended:** 16.23 pm

- A.** **DB:** This is the interview with Fiona McAteer, taking place in room 283 Parliament Buildings on 18 November 2014. The time is 3.37 pm. Present are Douglas Bain, Commissioner for Standards; [REDACTED] note-taker; and Fiona McAteer.

**FM:** Fiona McAteer.

**DB:** Thank you. First of all, thank you for coming. As you'll see, this interview is being tape-recorded, and, as I indicated in the correspondence, I've decided, in this particular investigation, I'll take all the evidence on oath.

- B.** **FM:** OK.

**DB:** So you can — are you content to take an oath on the Bible or do you prefer to make an affirmation?

**FM:** Yeah, no, an oath's fine. It's grand.

**DB:** Will you take the Bible in your right hand, please, and speak the words of the oath?

**FM:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

- C.** **DB:** Thank you very much. Now could I also just complete the formalities? Can you confirm that you received from me a note outlining the procedures to be followed and drawing your attention to certain offences?

**FM:** Yes. I can confirm.

**DB:** And do you have any questions about that?

**FM:** No.

**DB:** OK. Now the good news is that I've had the benefit of getting a copy of the draft of the note of your meeting with Carecall.

**FM:** OK.

**A.**     **DB:** But, as you understand, my role and that of Carecall are slightly different. So what I want to do — and I hope you can help me with this — is to go through, using that note as a framework.

**FM:** OK.

**DB:** But just drawing out the details and checking the things that are particularly relevant to my inquiry.

**FM:** Sure.

**DB:** And, when you're answering my questions, you need to be clear that what I'm interested in is what you personally saw or heard, not what others told you had happened.

**B.**     **FM:** OK.

**DB:** In other words, not hearsay evidence.

**FM:** Sure.

**DB:** Just so that I get the background right, am I correct in thinking that you were in paid employment with Mr McCrea from January 2012 until June 2013?

**FM:** Yes.

**C.**     **DB:** And then, immediately following that — 1 July 2013 until mid-September of this year, you were employed by NI21.

**FM:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. Why did you leave NI21 at that time?

**FM:** Em, I don't even really know how to explain that.



**A.** Well, after we did the Carecall statement, a report was sent to Basil, so our statements were in the back of it, so he was able to read what we had said about him and then we came into work; it just kinda was untenable that we were able to continue working there. And then because we knew that John was thinking of leaving, then the FAPP gets reduced, so there wouldn't be money there to employ us, and, to be honest, I don't think Basil would've kept us on after reading what we had said, so we did the — I don't think she's chair of the executive now — but [REDACTED] took Labour Relations Agency, so me and Peter Hutchinson went one day and just kind of, I suppose, gardening leave. I got 10 weeks, he got eight weeks, and that kind of gave us enough breathing space to mentally be able to get another job, because it was just such a toxic environment that, when John left in July, like I would've had no hope of getting a job or being a sane person, so —

**B.** **DB:** And, just to be, as I am interested in this, how did you become aware that Mr McCrea had received copies of what you had said to Carecall?

**FM:** John McCallister had asked Carecall whether Basil had received the report, and they said yes.

**DB:** Is that what John told you?

**C.** **FM:** Yeah, from the best of my knowledge, yeah. The best that I can recollect.

**DB:** OK. And, when you were working first of all for Mr McCrea, before you moved to working for the party, what was your role?

**FM:** Well, technically, I started with him in July 2011. I was on a GAP placement, which is graduate acceleration programme, so I worked for him for six months for free, so then my paid employment started that January.

**DB:** OK.

**FM:** So my role was kinda researcher and like constituency worker, so I split my time between up here and Lisburn constituency office.

**DB:** OK. And was that the Bow Street office?

**A. FM:** Hillsborough Road, so it was at the old office, which closed October 2012.

**DB:** Ah right. OK. I shouldn't have asked the question. And when you were up here, was it Basil's office you worked in?

**FM:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. And then, when you moved over to work for the party, what was your role?

**FM:** Research and policy.

**B. DB:** Much the same, except for the party rather than Mr McCrea.

**FM:** Yeah, and no constituency work.

**DB:** OK. And would it be — it has been suggested to me by others that Mr McCrea was someone who, whatever else he did or didn't do, was someone who made great use of social media and sending texts and using Twitter and so on. Is that right?

**C. FM:** Yeah, he's very active on Facebook, Twitter, email, social media. I suppose you have to these days to keep up with everything.

**DB:** And would it be right to say that he was very open with these and there was wide access to them?

**FM:** Oh yeah, I mean, everyone in the office would've had the passwords for his Facebook, his Twitter, they would've been on all the phones, you know, work phone, his phone and stuff, so we all had access to it, you know. Like, he wasn't, he didn't, you know, like, he could've logged into his Twitter and see who he was direct messaging cos a lot of the time it maybe would've been us who would've done the tweet or put up a picture or statement, you know, all the stuff that goes to social media, so, yeah, he was very open with all that.

**A.** **DB:** OK. And, I mean, there were, on occasion, items on the various social media that might be regarded as quite personal about him and his relationship with others.

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** It would be quite unusual that, wouldn't it, if there was anything secretive about these, for him to be allowing all his staff access to them.

**FM:** He isn't really that type of person though. He's very much more he thinks he's untouchable and his ego kind of gets the best of him.

**B.** So I think he thinks if you hide something in plain sight, people won't think there's anything wrong with it because, you know, if you have someone on your phone and you give your phone to someone, you clearly don't have anything to hide, when, in actual fact, maybe you do, but if you are making it look like it's innocent, then people generally think it is. And, when you are so busy and you've got 100 things going on, sometimes you don't think at the time, you know.

**DB:** Yes. OK. Can I start going through —

**FM:** I have a copy of mine. Can I take mine out?

**C.** **DB:** By all means, by all means. That will speed it up. Just for the benefit of whoever's reading this interview at a later stage, we are referring to a document, which I will now refer to as JMcC4, and it's an interview record of your interview at Carecall on 16 May 2014. Is that right?

**FM:** Yeah. Yes.

**DB:** And I think, to be absolutely precise, it's a draft record of your interview cos it was never actually signed off by you.

**FM:** No.

**DB:** Now, can we start then at paragraph 3, detail of allegations?

**A. FM:** Yep.

**DB:** And what I want to do very quickly is go through each one of these in turn. So, regarding Mr McCrea's conduct towards you as an individual, is there anything to which you took exception?

**FM:** I am sure from reading this you know I'm not exactly, I'm not someone who's a big hugger or a tactile person or I try to conduct myself in the most professional manner whenever I'm in work, so, I mean, hugging people or, you know, commenting on their clothes and stuff, to me, personally, isn't really that, it shouldn't happen in the workplace.

**B. So, yes, I guess you can read from that in my first interview, and it wasn't even an interview, he grilled me for two hours. Jamie Mackrell was in the room with us and, whenever he left, you know, his demeanour changed, you could see that there was kind of, he wasn't being professional and then, when Jamie came back into the room, he changed again. So, yes —**

**DB:** It was conduct that you didn't enjoy.

**FM:** No, I didn't think it was appropriate to be in a first interview, to comment on what someone was wearing.

**C. DB:** That's where we are talking about breaching the code of conduct. It perhaps doesn't quite reach that standard.

**FM:** No, mine definitely does not.

**DB:** And there would be others that would find it perfectly acceptable.

**FM:** Well, OK, if you say so.

**DB:** Now, there's a comment made in 3.2 about an incident at your fiancée's birthday. Do you remember what year that was?

**A. FM:** That would've been, well Ashleigh was with us, so that was, cos Ashleigh was in the room, that would've been 2000 and, it wasn't 12, 13? I think it was just before I left to go to NI21.

**DB:** What month is your fiancée's birthday?

**FM:** May. 3 May.

**DB:** So that would be 2013. May 2013.

**FM:** Yes. Yes, it would've.

**B. DB:** Then, if we go on to 3.3, reference to a UUP party dinner. That, I take it, must've been before February 2013.

**FM:** Yeah, it was the UUP party conference, October-time 2011, cos I was still on my GAP placement.

**DB:** OK. Then, in 3.4, you deal with an issue about [REDACTED] from the Alliance Party.

**FM:** Yep.

**DB:** Do you remember roughly when that was?

**C. FM:** No. I still worked for Basil. I definitely didn't work for the party. I don't think Karen had gone off sick yet, so I think it was probably between the end of 2012 and springtime 2013 maybe. I'm trying to think if he'd lost the Whip yet or not, so kind of that time.

**DB:** I see there's — I thought I'd read that Mr McCrea's explanation was that he hoped [REDACTED] might move from the Alliance —

**FM:** That wasn't why he took the picture. That's whenever he —

**DB:** No, but I'm wondering if that meant that it was after he left the UUP.

A. **FM:** Yeah, that probably would've been so it would've been 2013. He left February-time, didn't he, so kind of February/March, so springtime 2013.

**DB:** Then there are the references to you finding Mr McCrea's underwear both in the office and in the car.

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** And, when you asked him about that, did he give an explanation?

B. **FM:** Oh, we didn't ask him.

**DB:** Right.

**FM:** Because you don't. The way Basil ran his office and the way he had conditioned Karen to condition us was that you don't ask questions and you don't question him and you just do what you're told and you don't ask anything. So, to find something like that, Karen just picked them up, took them home and washed them because she thought that was just OK. I don't know if she ever confronted him about it, but I knew that that was not my position to do that, so I would not ask him about them.

C. **DB:** So what did you do with the underwear when you found it?

**FM:** I just kicked them under the — at that time, we had like soft seats; I just kicked them under the seat.

**DB:** OK.

**FM:** I wasn't going to touch them.

**DB:** I mean, would it be correct that Mr McCrea — I understand, in common with many other MLAs — would work here during the day and go on straight from here to other events at night and might change in their office?

**A.** **FM:** Yeah, but I don't recall him having an event that he had to change cos usually he would've brought, if it was a black tie or something, his suit into the office and because we would've been the ones to remind him he needed to bring a black tie or a change of clothes in. If he did have to change, that's fair enough. I just don't think your staff should have to walk in the next day and have your underwear sitting in the middle of the floor.

**DB:** Then, in 3.7, you refer to the summer school in Cork. I think that was the Sinn Féin summer school.

**FM:** Yes, Sinn Féin, yep.

**B.** **DB:** Were you there?

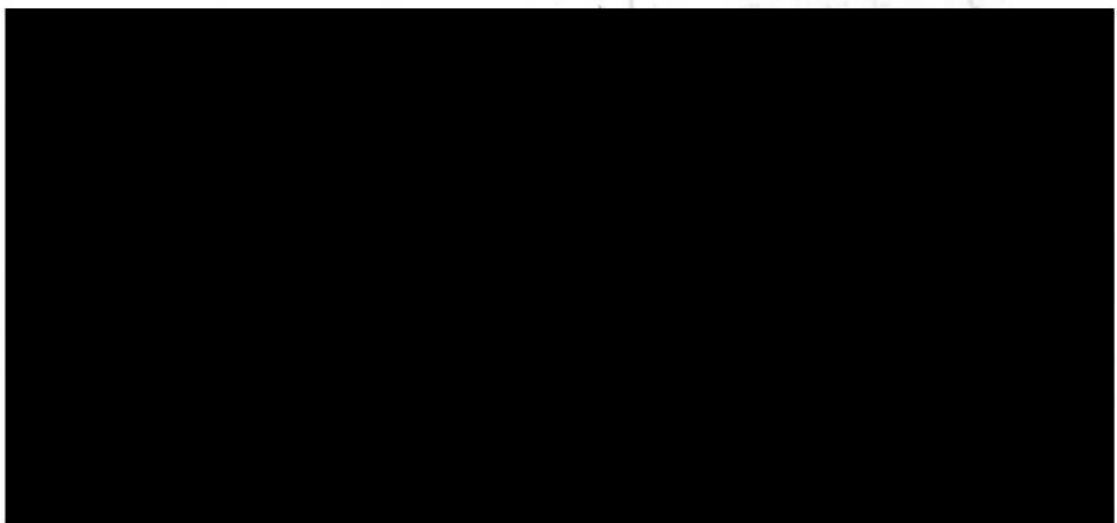
**FM:** No.

**DB:** So anything that's in 3.7 is what you've picked up from other people.

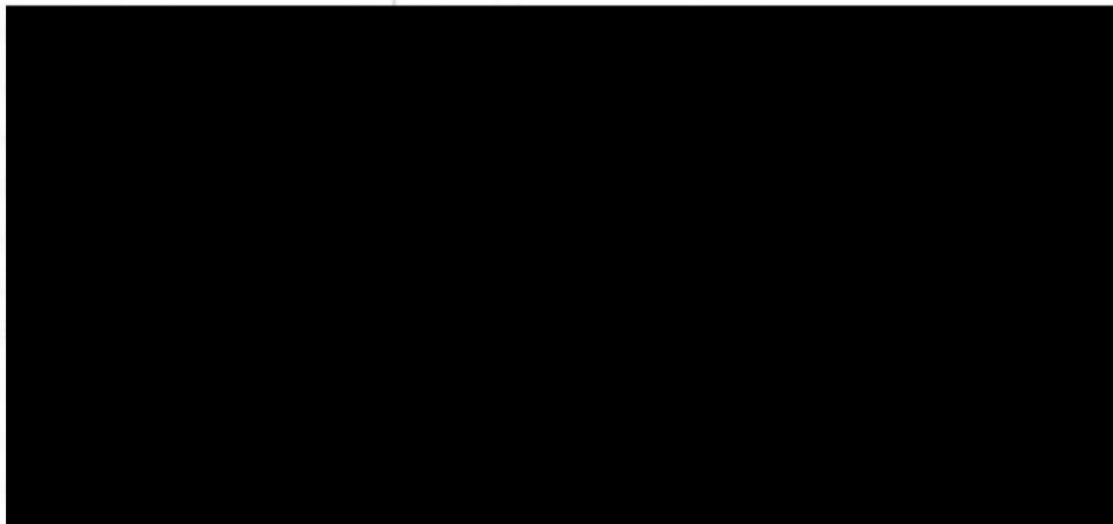
**FM:** Jacquelyn personally herself told me, yes.

**DB:** OK. Then, in 3.8, well that's also touched on in 3.9, which is how [REDACTED] [REDACTED] dealt with Jacquelyn saying what had happened in Cork. Again, you are relying on what Jacquelyn told you.

**C.** **FM:** Yeah, just what Jacquelyn told me.



A.



B.



**DB:** In 3.10, you are talking about a situation, a hostage, sort of, type situation. I didn't quite understand this and I suspect the notes don't do credit to what you were telling them.

C.

**FM:** No. To be honest, this whole thing, the notes aren't the best. There's a lot of mistakes in them and stuff. But, yeah, me and Peter lovingly call it hostage day.

**DB:** What is this all about in 3.10?

**FM:** It was before all the stories broke, they weren't too sure who it was, you know, that was going to the newspaper and all that stuff. So [redacted] was up for some reason and, obviously, Basil works here. So they came into our party office. Me and Peter were in the party office, and they came in and just sat down and started questioning us: did we know who it was, did we know like what the story was, and just kinda kept us sitting in the room. Because there was all the stuff with [redacted] and the legal letters that Basil had sent him, and there was lots of stuff on Twitter.



**A.** Me and Peter were sitting there trying to do our work, and the two of them were sitting there and they were kinda talking at us, wanting to know did we know who it was. And Jacquelyn was in Paris at the time, and accusing her of lying of being in Paris and saying, you know, is it her that's selling the story, is she really in Paris, all this stuff. But it's really hard to explain, but it's not even sometimes what they said, it was the fact that you knew you couldn't get up and leave, that they were standing there over you, pacing the floor kinda keeping you in the room until they found out the information that they wanted. You know, at the time, me and Peter think we did know who it was, but we didn't say that we knew who it was. And then [REDACTED] and Basil had this really strange conversation about who managed who, who was the kinda like Jacquelyn's HR manager and all the rest of it. Cos we all knew it was an open secret that [REDACTED] did all the HR problems.

**B.** She would've come up to Stormont all the time and had these little chats with them and all the rest of it, but Basil was trying to say, you know, he almost kind of said, sure, you line manage them, but then like didn't. And then he phoned John. John and him had a conversation. John wasn't there; it was on the phone. So, I mean, this went on for hours, just sitting in the room like going through all the tweets, going through who it could all be, all the [REDACTED] stuff, like everything. And then they finally left, and Peter went down to Basil's room and just said, look, you know, we feel like we're being accused of something and we felt that they were kind of trying to say that we were being accused of something, and Basil was like no, no, I'm just talking to you as a friend and not a colleague and like all this stuff and then he came marching back up to the room to say, you know, I'm not trying to put you under any stress, you know; I'm talking to you as a friend and all this, but all he really wanted to do was find out what information it was but doing it in such an aggressive way.

**C. DB:** But was it not quite understandable that he wanted to find out who was spreading what he regarded as malicious rumours about him?

**FM:** Yeah, but the conversations about Carecall had already started and, if you're innocent, you don't mind kind of Carecall or someone, an independent outside party, coming in to look at it. If you have nothing to hide, you know, and also, you know, not at one point did he ever say he was innocent. You know, he went through could it be Ashleigh, could it be Jacquelyn and all the rest of it.

- A.** So why would you list people who you thought it could be if you hadn't done anything wrong? So I think the way he went about it isn't a way that someone who's an innocent person goes about finding out information, not in such a hostile, to me and Peter who had nothing to do with it and were just trying to work.

**DB:** OK. Then, at 3.11, we go on to events relating to an awayday at La Mon.

**FM:** Yeah.

- B.** **DB:** And am I correct in thinking that, although the party hadn't been formed at that stage, this awayday was all about NI21?

**FM:** Yeah, no, the party hadn't been — I don't even think we'd got a name to be honest yet at that point. It was a day to bring — Basil had been going round meeting people he thought would be good for candidates and the executive and things like that, and wanted to invite Peter cos obviously he was coming on board as head of policy. He wanted us all to go to La Mon to kinda get to know each other and discuss ideas and kind of brainstorm and things like that. So that's kind of why they wanted to organise it.

- C.** **DB:** And so it would be fair to say that this was about NI21 and not about Basil McCrea in his role as an MLA?

**FM:** Em, well, it should've been about NI21 but, I mean, Basil just made it all about himself, so it depends what way you want to look at it.

**DB:** OK.

**FM:** And Basil is NI21, he is the leader of NI21, so it depends how you want to split that up.

**DB:** Yeah.

**FM:** Him being a founder of NI21 as well.

- A.** **DB:** I take your point. And I have been told by others that there was a — you seem to be a lot on the same lines — that there was, in the lead-up to this event, there was a fairly heated exchange between Basil and Karen. Is that right?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean it was very stressful. Like, once he lost the Whip, and then we had the all this UUP disciplinary stuff, he was, understandably, very stressed, so the weeks, it was a lot of weeks leading up to this, he was very stressed, very snappy, always shouting at Karen. She couldn't do anything right. You know, cos she did his diary, if she organised something and just say it changed at the last minute — there was an event at Queen's and the venue was changed at the last minute. The people at Queen's forgot to tell Karen, so Basil turned up and it was the wrong place and he like shouted at her down the phone.

- B.** I was in the office and I could hear him. So, I mean, it wasn't just that one incident when John McCallister was in the room, where he like was leaning over her desk and screaming in her face. So it wasn't a heated debate between the two of them; she sat there and took it.

**DB:** And did you see that yourself?

**FM:** Oh yeah. I was in the room. I was sitting there looking at John like please make this stop because he was in the worst mood and he was not listening to anyone. You know, that was really bad that day cos I mean he was really like screaming, but, you know, that wasn't unheard of in the office. There was a lot of shouting. He shouted an awful lot at Karen and other people if, you know, he was stressed or in a temper.

- C.** He would just say I'm stressed; that's all right, I'm allowed to scream in your face.

**DB:** Yeah. OK. Then, in 3.12, we come on to Ashleigh. Is that right? And did you ever see anything or hear anything of a sexual nature between the two of them?

**FM:** I didn't see anything that would be classified as a sexual nature, no. I mean there was things like when were overly — you know, if they were sitting, just say the chairs were here, you know, he would have his arm round the back of her chair or he would feel very comfortable to pick her juice up and drink it.

- A. There was an event at the Long Gallery that I was at and you know the way sometimes they all sit out and then maybe chairs at the back, so I was kinda just sitting in one of the chairs and the two of them came in and stood in front of me and, you know, he would stand — they would just stand very close, touching.

DB: Yeah.

FM: That's not sexual but, you know, it's just I wouldn't stand that close to my boss.

DB: And am I right that, from — for the sort of six months before she stopped working at Stormont, Karen appeared to be under a great deal of stress?

- B. FM: Stress caused by Basil, yes.

DB: Well, she told you it was caused by Basil.

FM: I was —

DB: And you saw some things.

FM: Well, I was in the office every single day with her and, yeah, I mean I was in the office every single day with her. I could see, I could see what was going on, yeah.

- C. DB: Well, I mean, just to, so as we have it on the record, you've told me about one incident when he was shouting at her.

FM: Yeah.

DB: Were there others of a similar nature.

FM: Yeah, well, there was that time on the phone when he phoned her up and would shout down the phone at her, and he would, yeah, I mean there's a couple of times that she had to go into [REDACTED]'s room to cool off and hide because he's not the best at explaining things in a cool, calm manner.

**A.** **DB:** And then you mention in 3.14 an event at the Europa. Is this really in the same vein as your comments about standing inappropriately close together?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean, it was, there was always just, you know when you just get a feeling that something's not right but you can't really put your finger on it and there's no evidence —

**DB:** It made you suspicious.

**FM:** Yeah. I mean I didn't have any hard evidence to say either way, but, you know, I mean, being around Basil for three years, when you work long hours and you work that intensely with someone, you do get to know someone and kind of what's going on, and I just had a feeling, but it's just my feeling. I have no hard evidence to say if that was true or not, but —

**B.** **DB:** And then, in 3.15, it records what you were told by Ashleigh.

**FM:** Yes, and —

**DB:** And whether it's true or not, you can't say.

**FM:** And also Neil McNickle sent an email or tweet to John saying that Basil had asked him to do the same thing, to check up on her at the bus stop. So I saw that.

**DB:** How did you come to see that?

**C.** **FM:** I think — I don't really know — I think I was given it to give to Carecall maybe. I think I was given it to give to Carecall. Yeah.

**DB:** But, at this stage, you were working for NI21, weren't you?

**FM:** Yeah, but sure Carecall happened when I was working for NI21.

**DB:** So John gave it to you to give to Carecall.

**FM:** Yeah, but I don't think Neil had sent it to John until all this stuff happened.

**A. DB:** Ah right, OK.

**FM:** He didn't send it whenever I worked for Basil, if that makes sense.

**DB:** And then we go back in 3.16 and 3.17 to Jacquelyn Neglia. How did Jacquelyn pronounce her second name?

**FM:** I think there's a silent g, so Nee-lee-ah.

**DB:** Oh right, OK.

**B. FM:** Cos I remember she used to always say people pronounced it wrong. I think she said there was a silent g.

**DB:** You don't by any chance have contact details for her, do you?

**FM:** I do, yeah.

**DB:** Are you prepared to share those with me?

**FM:** Yeah, no, I can give them to you. I have her email address and her phone number. Obviously, she's in Canada, so I can give them to you; that's no problem.

**C. DB:** That would be excellent because we have had difficulty up till now trying to track her down. And then 3.18 is about [REDACTED]. Did you ever see anything of Basil and [REDACTED] together? Or is all you know about it is what you found in the email exchange?

**FM:** Yeah, just, I mean, I saw them together up at Stormont cos obviously we invited her up to events and stuff, but anything untoward, no.

**DB:** And then 3.19 is your analysis of it, which is interesting. And 3.20 is something that Suzanne told you.

**FM:** No. That's why, I mean, these notes aren't very good. [REDACTED] was at the — was that Greenhill and Newcastle, the weekend away they had for NI21. [REDACTED] was there and had said to me that he had seen Basil —

A. DB: All right. Someone else told you, not —

FM: Yeah. No, I was just there on the Sunday. I didn't stay for obvious reasons.

DB: I didn't quite understand 3.21. What is that all about?

FM: Basil used to have a girl called [REDACTED] that worked for him and did all his [REDACTED] when he was on the [REDACTED]. This is before my time. I've heard it from a couple of different people, but she — the [REDACTED] at the time was [REDACTED] removed her from Basil's office and she had to then work in the [REDACTED] office, and, you know, they were kinda told to ask no questions, she's coming here to work.

B. I don't know what happened but, when Karen started, she used to pop down and ask Karen are you OK and check up on her and stuff. So —

DB: So is this reference to [REDACTED] —

FM: That's wrong.

DB: That should be [REDACTED].

FM: [REDACTED]

C. DB: It was the [REDACTED] that was sort of slightly confusing me.

FM: No, that's just the, on their behalf, that's wrong. It's the [REDACTED]

DB: And then you personally have no knowledge of the thing.

FM: No.

DB: To do with that. And, again, in 3.22, do you have any personal knowledge of that?



A. **FM:** Well, I spoke to her. She was leaving whenever I was kind of coming in. We had overlapped and stuff, but, again, just from what Jamie Mackrell and [REDACTED] would've told me about what went on in the office and stuff. I was never actually working while she was working.

**DB:** And then, 3.23 is about Jamie Mackrell, is that right?

**FM:** 3.23?

**DB:** No, Nigel Macauley.

B. **FM:** Macauley, yeah.

**DB:** And he was taken on by John when Basil was on holiday, is that right? And then Basil wasn't best pleased when he came back.

**FM:** No, he wasn't best pleased. Well, technically, I mean, it was already confirmed with [REDACTED] and John, and there had been a conversation with Basil and John had asked Basil well, if you have anyone better, bring them forward and we can interview them and stuff, and he never did it. So, yeah, I mean, like John did hire him when Basil was away and, as I said there, it wasn't, John didn't do the right thing there and he could've handled it in a completely different way.

C. **But, yeah, I don't think — but still the treatment that Nigel received from Basil was not — He should've taken it out on John, not Nigel, cos he was the employee, you know, they're the employer.**

**DB:** But you, it is recorded here, you didn't actually witness that. You saw the results of it.

**FM:** Not the hour and a half one, but, obviously, he was in our party room, so any time Basil would come in, I could see, you know, he would snap at him and be shouty and shirty with him and stuff, but I had to leave the room. I went down and worked in John's room when that happened and then I came back up when they had finished.



**A.** But, I mean, that wasn't a one-off; it was a continuous again thing. Any time Basil was around him, he just, Nigel just seemed to make him really angry.

**DB:** I mean the impression you are giving, and I want to be clear if this is intentional or not, is that Mr McCrea was abrasive with his staff and short-tempered.

**FM:** Yeah. Yeah, 100%, that is the way he is. He's just not a good manager. Some people should be managers and some people shouldn't. He shouldn't.

**DB:** And do you really put it down to that: he just wasn't a good manager? Or did it go further than that?

**B.** **FM:** It went further than that but that was one aspect of it. He just didn't know how to manage staff.

**DB:** OK. And then there's 3.24. I'm afraid I don't quite follow that but I suspect it doesn't bear much relationship to what you said.

**FM:** Is that [REDACTED]?

**DB:** I think so.

**C.** **FM:** Yeah, yeah, she worked for us for over the elections for about 10 days and then she just left because of the way Basil and Tina treated her. She was used to a more professional environment, and Basil again is used to people that he can bully and push around and people who are desperate for a job, while she had a lot of freelance stuff, you know, she didn't really need this. You know, Basil would take on a lot of people, myself included, that I couldn't find a job at the time, so you kinda felt indebted to him. She clearly was established in her career and, you know, didn't need it. So she was with us for 10 days, and part of the reason was the way [REDACTED] treated her and the way Basil treated her and the staff.

**DB:** And that's another example of his management style.

**FM:** Yeah.

**A.** **DB:** OK. And then you go on, in 3.25, what's this all about? I mean is this actually another example of you having a feeling that it wasn't right?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean —

**DB:** Nothing definite to say there was something improper about it.

**FM:** No, I mean, you know, she's a young girl and he spends an awful lot of time with her and at her house. You know, his car was seen there. I mean I've seen it late at night and first thing in the morning. You know, whatever you want to do, if you're consenting adults, do whatever you want, but it's just the fact that she is a young girl and, you know, she had a boyfriend, then she didn't have a boyfriend and she kinda just didn't really see any of her friends, and it was literally she was always with him, she was always working.

**B.** She was going to buy a car. Went and test drove it and everything and then said, no, because sure Basil can give me lifts; he does that. Again, like, I don't know. I mean like I tried to ask her and she was like, no, I'm fine, so, again, I don't know.

**DB:** I mean is your approach really the line that, whatever we think was going on, if the other party, the female party, doesn't wish to make a complaint about it, then you don't really felt that it's your place to interfere?

**FM:** In relation to Kirsty?

**C.** **DB:** Well, Kirsty and Ashleigh.

**FM:** I think it was hard, well, it was hard for me cos a lot of people would've come and talked to me about different things, but, from the day and hour I started, I was told that you don't talk about him; everything gets back to him. You know, you don't talk about what goes on, and because Karen was so conditioned to take his side over everything — you know, he would always like a disclaimer, if you have any issues, talk to Karen, she's the office manager. But you knew that like she would never do anything about it and she would always take his side. So I never felt safe or comfortable to actually like go to her with anything and, you know, it's in my Carecall statement that — I'm sure we'll get to it — once I started working for him paid, originally, I was only working Monday to Thursday.

- A. I was off sick and Basil was going somewhere, so we needed the form in signed to get to the HR and stuff, and it was after the Justice Committee and we had an American journalist over doing something, and I had gone straight up the stairs to type up some notes cos, whatever happened in the Justice Committee, I thought, you know, we need to do something about this. So Basil came up a wee bit later. The door was open and he was like, oh, we really need to discuss that tomorrow, and I was like, sure, I'm not in tomorrow, I'm off. So I'd been working Fridays for him for free because there was just so much work to do and I didn't mind, so that Friday I thought I'm going to take the Friday off cos I'm not getting paid to work it, and he just went through me. He started screaming at me. The door was open and there was an American journalist standing there, and I was just sitting in front of my computer. He just: what do I pay you for, what are you good for, what do you actually do? This is ridiculous. And I said to him, I only get paid to work Monday to Thursday.
- B. I've been working those Fridays for free for you, and he was like that's not what I wanted. You were supposed to work full time. The only reason I took you on was that you would work full time. I was like, well, that's what Karen had told me. Karen had filled in my contract with you, Basil. You signed it. Well, you know, I want you to change it from Monday. You're going to change it and you're going to work full time. I was quite upset cos you don't expect to be shouted at like that and told that you're worthless and that you're not doing your job and you're not doing anything. So I went home and I texted Karen and said he's just gone through me for a short cut, and she phoned me: don't talk to anyone, don't tell your boyfriend, don't tell your parents. I was crying down the phone and I wasn't allowed. Don't even tell me. if Basil ever finds out we've had this conversation.
- C. You know, this is the way it was. You just realised that you didn't, you couldn't say anything. There was no one to go to because she was just as scared of him as the rest of us were because, you know, he turns everything around to make it out like — With [REDACTED] he made it out that she wasn't doing her job right, when she was doing her job right, because he knew that it was him. In everything, he always says that, you know, people have mental-health issues; that's why they're like that. It's never him. He can never take responsibility for the fact that, actually, OK, sorry, I shouldn't have shouted at you, you know, I was just a wee bit stressed or whatever. He will never apologise for that. He never apologised to me for it. He never even brought it up.

**A.** That's just the way it was, so I always felt that I couldn't go to anyone. I couldn't talk to anyone. And, at that time, you know, we were friendly enough with John and his office but not really and, because you worked for Basil, the UUP didn't really want anything to do with you. So it wasn't until I was taken out of Basil's office and put in with Peter that I actually felt safe for the first time; that I actually here was someone I could trust and I could turn to. Because you didn't really know what to do because, you know, he had an answer for everything. Again, you know, like, as you said, if I wasn't witness to the things, you know, you kinda have to just who's telling the truth and weigh it up. But him as a person, he kind of cultivated this atmosphere of fear in the office, you know, that it was, you know, you didn't ask to leave. You were told when you could leave. You'd be sitting there at 6.30 at night — I was only getting paid till 5 o'clock — you'd maybe been in from 8 o'clock in the morning and you were scared to leave.

**B.** Or you were sitting there scared of what mood he was going to come in to because you always had to kind of — and I know he's a politician and he's your boss, you know, things like that, but when you're in a small, little room at Stormont, you know, you all have to respect each other, and he had no respect for his staff. I think that was the problem. Because Karen kinda came on board when the whole thing with his sister happened and like different stuff; she was just trying to get an office that made him happy so that he didn't shout and he didn't get really cross, so that we were all kinda conditioned of if you want him to be a nice person, this is what you have to do. So it doesn't matter what he does, you just don't talk.

**C. DB:** OK. That's very helpful. Then where did that get us to?

**FM:** I kinda went off there.

**DB:** That was 3.25. And then 3.26 is all about the events just before the election. The rumours and so on. I think we've dealt with that, by and large. We've obviously covered 3.26.

**FM:** OK.

**DB:** I mean that's been incredibly helpful and insightful. Is there anything else that you want to say to me about this matter?

A. **FM:** I don't know if we have enough time. I think everyone has to be held accountable for their actions. You know, especially an elected representative. They are elected by the people. They should be held to a higher standard, and, you know, the Civil Service have something in place about the way MLAs can talk to staff, and I know the Committee's looking at the code of conduct and stuff, and I know it is hard because you have to be able to prove where he's broken the code of conduct and things like that. I think, you know, it does need to be looked at and, unfortunately, you know, whenever you put someone, an employer from any company, a CEO, whenever you have that position of power and whenever they abuse it, you know, Basil has a pattern of picking people that are vulnerable and he manipulates them and he can tell your weaknesses, you know, and he uses that against you, and he's done it to everyone, and you can see the pattern.

B. You know, I could tell very quickly whenever I got into the office that I was going to have to be a very different person. I think it took them months to realise that I had a boyfriend or anything about my life because I could see that, you know, like Jamie Mackrell would really look up to him and talk to him about, you know, his problems and stuff like that, so then he was able to manipulate him whenever Basil needed something from Jamie. You know, all those times that I lent you money or, you know, I helped you with that, you know, you need to help me out. And Karen as well. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and stuff like that, so she feels, and I said it, you feel indebted to the man because he has given you a chance when no one else has, you know, and I am very grateful for that, you know, I got three years' amazing experience.

C. You know, and it is hard cos you don't, you don't want to be seen like you're causing trouble and what's worth kind of sticking your neck out for and saying that this isn't right.

But because I had been there for so long and you see the pattern of the people that he picks, and we would have people that would be in the constituency office with us, you know, who wanted to work, were great wee workers at university and all the rest of it but if they weren't up for swanning around with him or like a bit of craic, he wouldn't talk to them, he wouldn't really care. You know, he used to bring all these people up to Stormont.



- A. I used to always say to him, you know, this isn't the 'X Factor', we don't need another sob story here, we need people that are going to like bring added value to the office, you know, and do some work. But he was only interested in people who he thought was a bit of fun that he could like parade around with. You know, we had a girl [REDACTED] who worked about eight weeks' work experience with us, and we were in the constituency office, and we were in my office in the constituency office and he came in and was like, oh [REDACTED] do you want to go for lunch, and I was like, you know, he picked people that would quite happily not really want to do any work and that's why I think he kinda left me alone cos I produced the work for him. I was the one that did the work. So I was quite happy to do that. I don't want to swan around with him.
- B. I don't want to get my picture taken with him. You know, I wanted him to be my boss and I always tried to be very professional with him and I think it's just sad that there is so many people that even come up to me now and will say different things, and, you know, he's gotten away with it for so long and it's not something that he's just developed. I think it's just a personality trait that he's always had, and then, when you do get into a position of an MLA or anyone with power, it kind of goes to your head a wee bit. And even with the money, he just sees this building as an extension of himself and his OCA and, you know, whenever he lost the Whip, he then with his disciplinary, he got the Chair — he was the Chair of DEL at the time — he got that taken away from him and all he did was complain about how he'd lost the money, the 10, 11 grand. Not that he'd lost the Chair of DEL, which he was actually a pretty good Chair. He was good at it and he liked it and people responded well to him. He didn't complain about that. He complained about how he had lost the money.
- C. I was sitting there going you pay me minimum wage, which is near enough what you've just lost with your Chair and you're sitting here having the gall to complain to me that you'd lost that money, not that you'd lost the Chair.

And even the stuff with Ashleigh; he was Chair of the DEL Committee whenever he met her and, you know, he pursued her to get her up because me and Karen had to contact her, and she wasn't really that interested, but he just kept going and pursuing her to get her up. Again, a girl who has no interest in politics — has nothing to do with politics — he just hunted her like prey. He just was obsessed with getting her up.

**A.** Me and Karen even said, right, if we don't mention it for a while, maybe he'll just leave it, but, no, if we hadn't given him an update or if she hadn't come up to Stormont, he'd be like why isn't she here, you know, giving us a hard time because she didn't want to come up to Stormont or she would come up to Stormont and [REDACTED] would maybe be waiting for her because she didn't really know why she was coming up to Stormont, she thought she was just coming up for an hour to talk to him, but actually he wanted her up all the time. You know, it's things like that that you might take one wee bits of pieces that doesn't really seem like anything but then, whenever you put it all together and you step back and you look at the picture that's there, I mean like, it is just hard to see that pattern over and over again and the fact that so many people haven't been able to stand up and, you know, it was to my own detriment because I lost my job whenever I did the Carecall statement so, you know, it's not that I'm out to get him or anything and, you know, I don't want to see him hung, drawn and quartered.

**B.** I just kind of think that if you are an elected representative, you have to be held accountable for your actions because the people have elected you and you should be held to a higher standard.

**DB:** Of course, Ashleigh, for example, if she had concerns about harassment and bullying at work could've pursued an industrial tribunal care.

**FM:** But, again, it's the power he has over people. He makes it out, and it's not kind of till you kind of maybe get out of it a wee bit that you realise that he isn't actually that powerful as an MLA, that the other MLAs don't really rate him.

**C.** You know, whenever you are up in this building, it's so impressive and again it is because these people are so vulnerable and they don't really know about politics so they think these politicians are so mighty and powerful and you kind of think, well, why would people believe me over him when he's, you know, held in higher esteem in society. There is that aspect of it, and, you know, you kinda get caught up in it all and, again, when you're in the office and there is that culture that you don't talk about anything and, you know, like he knows all these people, very powerful people and things like that, I can understand why people don't take a tribunal.

**DB:** OK. That's very helpful. Anything else?

**A.** **FM:** I'm sure there's lots of things, but —

**DB:** If you think of anything else that you think would help me in my investigation, by all means, drop me a note or an email or whatever.

**FM:** Actually, one thing before I leave — I'm not going to keep you too long — the Karen stuff. I know Karen is still working for him. Kirsty told me that they were going to get rid of her but one of the reasons he didn't want to was because it would look bad up here because she did security before she worked for Basil so everyone knows her and all the rest of it, and I just kind of think he has manipulated her so much that she now can't see that he is still using her, and just because she is still like, she is here and I just kind of feel so sorry for her that she's here.

**B.** Maybe she's quite happy to be here, I don't know; I haven't spoken to her since I kind of left, you know, but I just — that man's put her, she was off for about a month for work-related stress, you know, and that was down to him, so, yeah.

**DB:** OK. Well, as I say, if there's anything else springs to mind, and if you could either give me or send me Jacquelyn's contact details, that would be very helpful.

**FM:** Yes, I will. Your contact details are on the letter you sent to me, aren't they?

**DB:** Yes, they will be.

**FM:** OK. I will send you that through.

**DB:** OK. Well, the time is now 4.23 and we will terminate the interview. Thank you very much for coming in.





## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Nigel Macauley

**Date:** 12 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Nigel Macauley

**Time Started:** 11.25 am

**Time Ended:** 12.30 pm

- A. Mr Bain: OK, well first of all, thank you very much for coming, Mr MacCauley, at such short notice.
- Mr Macauley: No problem at all.
- Mr Bain: Just to go through some of the formalities. Can I hand you a notice, which is simply requiring you to attend even though you are here? But there is a point to it because now that you've been served with a notice, the statutory provisions apply. I'll explain what these are in a moment.
- As you'll see, we are tape-recording this interview.
- Mr Macauley: I'd like to put on record that I did save you a stamp not sending this out.
- Mr Bain: Yes.
- B. Mr Macauley: That's a small joke, there.
- Mr Bain: Yes, all contributions are gratefully received.
- The way this will proceed is I will ask you a series of questions and, hopefully, we'll have your answers to them. If you don't understand any question, please just say so. It may well be that my question is ill-framed, and I will clarify it.
- Mr Macauley: OK, all right. That's all grand.
- Mr Bain: When answering, what I'm interested in is what you personally saw or heard, not what other people told you happened.
- Mr Macauley: Ah right; so, first-hand points only.
- Mr Bain: We don't want hearsay evidence.
- Mr Macauley: All right, that's all fine.
- C. Mr Bain: After the interview, a transcript will be prepared. I will send you a copy of the transcript and you'll have an opportunity to propose any changes to it if you think it's been transcribed incorrectly.
- Mr Macauley: Ah right, if my words maybe have been taken out of context or something like that.
- Mr Bain: Yes. You send these back to me. If I agree with you, then I simply amend the transcript. If I don't agree with you –
- Mr Macauley: Then it gets messy.
- Mr Bain: – the transcript stands but your request for changes is attached to your statement, not to the transcript.
- Mr Macauley: That sounds fair enough.
- Mr Bain: Then, once I've finished my investigation into the complaint, I submit a report to the Committee on Standards and Privileges.

- A. The transcript of all my interviews are attached to that report, and also would be your request for a change to it so the Committee see what you requested, and I will say in my report why I did not accept it, if that was the case.

Mr Macauley: OK, that's all fine.

Mr Bain: In due course, the Committee will reach a decision on whether or not there has been a breach of the code of conduct and, as you probably know, they publish a report.

My report, including your transcript and any other transcripts, are attached to that, so you should just be aware –

Mr Macauley: That it will be completely public.

Mr Bain: – that what you say to me will enter the public domain in due course.

- B. Mr Macauley: Ah, right.

Mr Bain: There are a number of offences in relation to these interviews. If you fail to answer a question, or refuse to answer a question, that is a criminal offence unless you have a reasonable excuse. Like, for example, you were going to incriminate yourself in a criminal offence –

Mr Macauley: Ah right. OK.

Mr Bain: – would be a reasonable excuse.

Mr Macauley: Well, hopefully not.

Mr Bain: Upon conviction for failing or refusing to answer a question without reasonable excuse, a person is liable to imprisonment for up to three months.

If you give a false or deliberately misleading answer to a question, then a person who does that is liable to prosecution for perjury, for which, of course, the penalties are very much greater.

- C. Mr Macauley: I could imagine so.

Mr Bain: In view of the nature of this particular inquiry, I have decided that all the evidence will be taken on oath.

Mr Macauley: All right. That's all fine.

Mr Bain: So, unless you wish to make an affirmation rather than the oath, could you take the book in your right hand and read the words of the oath?

Mr Macauley: I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Mr Bain: OK, thank you very much. That gets the formal bit of it over and I hope this won't take us very long.

Can I just clarify one or two things?

A. Mr Macauley: Shall I keep this?

Mr Bain: Yes, that's yours to take away. You can frame it.

Mr Macauley: I shouldn't have folded it, now.

Mr Bain: I've got the benefit of having got a copy of the record of your interview with Carecall –

Mr Macauley: Ah, lucky you.

Mr Bain: – and there are just one or two points that I want to –

Mr Macauley: Do you want it signed?

Mr Bain: No, it is a draft but we'll come to that. First of all, can I ask you: I was looking at the various people employed by Mr McCallister and Mr McCrea in NI21. There is a [REDACTED] Was [REDACTED] a relative of yours?

B. Mr Macauley: No, no relation at all. I believe she ceased employment before NI21 was formed. At least I believe so.

Mr Bain: OK. Now, am I right in thinking that you started on a paid basis at the Assembly on 13 January 2014?

Mr Macauley: Yes, that's correct.

Mr Bain: Was it a five-day week that you worked?

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: Yes, and your time was split, as I understand it, 60% working for John McCallister and 40% working for NI21.

Mr Macauley: It's either that or the other way round; one of those two. I don't recall.

C. Mr Bain: OK.

Mr Macauley: It's not fresh in my mind, I suppose. So, yes, there was 60:40 anyway in someone's favour ... or disadvantage.

Mr Bain: Prior to starting then in mid-January, had you worked for John McCallister on a voluntary basis?

Mr Macauley: I'd done some ad hoc work for John prior to that.

Mr Bain: OK.

Mr Macauley: But not very much.

Mr Bain: Then in the period when you were getting paid after January, what was your role for John?

- A. Mr Macauley: My role was varying, I suppose, in a way. I dealt with research elements. I dealt with constituency elements as well as general press and publicity, certain aspects of communications and such. That was, I suppose, some of the nature of my job.

Then I also dealt with communications and membership and such in terms of the party, although I wasn't really able to do that because Mr McCrea just wouldn't allow me to do my job.

Mr Bain: OK, but can I confirm that at no time had you actually been employed by Mr McCrea?

Mr Macauley: Only through the party.

Mr Bain: Only through the party. OK.

Mr Macauley: I'd say that one of the provisos of me being employed by the party was that I would report to John, and that was accepted and such, but I still basically saw Mr McCrea as – well, he was the party leader and such.

- B. Mr Bain: Of course.

Mr Macauley: So, as a chain of command, he was sort of almost above John as such in that structure.

Mr Bain: But, strictly speaking, you were for the 40% or 60% or whatever it was that you were working for the party, it was for the party rather than for Mr McCrea as an individual.

Mr Macauley: Yes, that would be correct, although, as you might be aware, with politics and such there's sometimes a large overlap in certain elements and such –

Mr Bain: Of course.

Mr Macauley: – whereas there is not just like a brick wall between you and this other element.

- C. Mr Bain: Am I right that you stopped working here on 31 May 2014?

Mr Macauley: Yes, that's correct.

Mr Bain: And you stopped working for both John McCallister and the party?

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: And why was that?

Mr Macauley: I'd been given my notice on – I can't remember the exact date. I was given it, actually, by John around the end of March. I can tell you what he told me in that meeting first hand but it then could be construed as hearsay but I can tell you and you can decide.

Mr Bain: Things had gone pear-shaped by the time you left.

- A. Mr Macauley: Oh yes, by the time I left it had, but I had been given my notice well before that. They wanted to keep me around until after the election and then get rid of me. As far as I was informed, they wanted to just give me the one week's notice that I was legally entitled to, which is all legal and fine, but John thought that was unfair considering that I'd come on board and such and he wanted to give me as much time to put other things in place as possible

Mr Bain: OK, so it was primarily the election was over in, what, the first week in May?

Mr Macauley: That would be 22 May.

Mr Bain: OK. Now, can I come to some of the issues that you raised with Carecall?

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: You mentioned that shortly after you started, and I think Mr McCrea had been on holiday or away, he came back and there was a meeting at which there was a difficulty about your contract and what was in it. Do you recall the discussion?

- B. Mr Macauley: Yes, he wasn't too fussed on me doing a lot of it, and the meeting, as I think I said to Carecall, was about an hour and a half long and it wasn't so much of a meeting or discussion as it was Mr McCrea sort of shouting and swearing at me for an hour and a half.

Mr Bain: Yes. Who had drawn up the contract?

Mr Macauley: It was a standard Assembly contract, so I suppose it would – John was the one who did that process. John was the one who went through with the employment process and such.

Mr Bain: Reading the record of the Carecall interview, am I right in thinking that Mr McCrea's concern was that the job description was far too wide and that no one – no normal person – could actually manage to do all of that?

- C. Mr Macauley: That's what he said. In fact, he said that the entire White House staff couldn't do this job description, which I disagreed with. There was a lot of overlapping areas and such, and while it was a long enough form, there was a lot of "write a report on this and do that".

I thought I could do it and that's why I accepted it as a job description. At the same time, I met with the chair of the party prior to my employment and she felt it was fine. I met with the party secretary prior to that as well and he felt it was fine.

I met with Mr McCallister and he thought it was fine. I thought it was fine but Mr McCrea seemed to just have no faith in my ability to carry it out, I suppose. Well, possibly.

Mr Bain: That was the impression you formed.

Mr Macauley: No, my impression was that he was very angry and just didn't like me. He did shout and swear at me for an hour and a half. I don't think if someone is unable to do it, I don't know if you do that to them or not. He just seemed a very angry individual who ...



A. Mr Bain: Who else was present at this meeting?

Mr Macauley: [REDACTED] who was the party's chairperson, and Peter Hutchinson, who was the party head of policy.

Mr Bain: As regards the swearing, was the swearing directed at you or was it swearing about the contract being unrealistic or was it a bit of both?

Mr Macauley: There was a bit of both. In addition to that, there was remarks made towards John as well, who wasn't present. I remember one in particular because Basil McCrea said if John McCallister was here right now, "I would have him pinned against that wall" – he pointed to the wall behind me – "and I would be kneeling him in the balls".

Mr Bain: OK.

B. Mr Macauley: I remember that quite vividly because I tried to make light of the situation when John actually called on the phone. I wasn't going to take it but Mr McCrea insisted upon it after he saw my phone lit up with John's name. I said I was in with Mr McCrea now and tried to make a light-hearted remark of wear a cup the next time you see him, to try and defuse the situation, which didn't really work.

Mr Bain: Didn't that make clear the fact that he was saying that about Mr McCallister? Mr McCrea was primarily annoyed with Mr McCallister and what he put in the contract and that's what he was swearing about.

Mr Macauley: I think there was an element of that and I am quite thankful that Peter Hutchinson was there. He was defensive in the sense of saying that, "Basil, you should take this up with John", but at the same time him continuing on for the best part of an hour after that to me felt like it was also against me personally.

Mr Bain: Did that cause you concern at the time?

C. Mr Macauley: Yes, a great deal. At that point in time, I was unsure of what I had got myself into. I thought it would be a bit better than this. It wasn't a great start, to say the least.

Mr Bain: I think the Carecall note records in relation to that that he was in there for two hours. It is very blurred.

Mr Macauley: Well, it's blurred in the sense of – I would say about the Carecall report actually is that I am not – It's not completely accurate. I didn't receive a copy until after pretty much the Carecall investigation was halted, so I wasn't actually given a copy of that until after it was all finished. So, I never got a chance to amend it.

When they showed me the written version and read it out to me on the day, there were slight differences. They exaggerated certain points and left out elements as well sometimes but I would say blurred in the sense that I don't remember every single thing he said to me.

Mr Bain: Plainly, I would say, after two hours.



- A. Mr Macauley: Yes, well [Interruption] Sorry about that. That was my phone. Yes, the hour and a half/two hours of the thing, it's hard to remember every single aspect, especially whenever it becomes very repetitive in that it's, effectively, a person ranting and raving, shouting and swearing and screaming. It becomes a bit of a blur of anger, I suppose, from this person at you.

Mr Bain: Yes, OK, that's very clear. According to the Carecall note, there was also some sort of incident when you were in Mr McCrea's office dealing with the website and, eh –

Mr Macauley: I do recall that but I cannot remember what I said in the report and I want them to sort of match up, if you know what I mean.

Mr Bain: This is reading it short, that essentially Mr McCrea was swearing and you asked him to stop and you made a comment about the kindergarten.

- B. Mr Macauley: Yes, I remember that now. Yes, I was down, eh – His style of leadership and management and people management and communication left a lot to be desired. So, whenever he actually then asked me to do something, he would sort of summon me or burst into the party office and start going over what he wanted me to do.

On this occasion, I went down to his office and he was talking about the website and about what he wants changed with it. He wanted me to look at some different aspects of what to do with it.

I asked him for some more information, some more guidelines on what he was exactly looking for because there is a very wide scope –

Mr Bain: Of course.

- C. Mr Macauley: – of what you want in those terms. As it is with almost anything, you want a bit of guidance.

Based on our first encounter and his way of speaking, I thought, well, I want to try and nip it in the bud here and say he does not need to shout at me, he does not need to swear at me. You can talk to me like a human being.

Whenever I confronted him about this, he got more angry. He did swear. He said, "Where do you think you are? Are you in fucking kindergarten?", which annoyed me for two reasons: one, we are not American – that's a bad joke – but, secondly, because it didn't resolve the issue at all. If anything, it just made the job even more difficult to do.

Mr Bain: Is it right, as recorded by Carecall, that you asked him to stop swearing and he asked you to leave?

Mr Macauley: Yes. He just asked me to get out of the office. He said he didn't want to speak to me anymore.

Mr Bain: OK. Is it right that prior to becoming an MLA, Mr McCrea was actually very deeply involved in IT and had given expert evidence on IT matters?

- A. Mr Macauley: I'm unaware of a great deal of his life but I had been told that he was involved in the IT sector and that he did say to me one time he ran his own IT company for years and had many staff and he knows all about this stuff.

So, I don't really know. I can't remember when he said that or in relation to what but I do recall him saying that, yes.

Mr Bain: I think the next incident that's referred to in the Carecall note was again in Mr McCrea's office and it was a meeting you were having about Google Drive.

Mr Macauley: Actually, that was in Mr McCallister's office.

Mr Bain: In Mr McCallister's office.

Mr Macauley: But that was because we were just looking for a place to get away as such. There were a lot of people in Mr McCrea's office, there were people in the party office, and Mr McCallister, I believe, on that day was not at the Assembly and his staff were in his constituency office, so his office was available, so we used it, effectively, for the meeting –

- B. Mr Bain: OK.

Mr Macauley: – but Mr McCallister wasn't involved in it in any way.

Yes, we met that day and he was showing me through the whole Google – Actually, I think the meeting may have started in Mr McCrea's office and we may have moved whenever we were getting into things like web conferencing and such, when we were looking for a quieter environment.

It was going fine, actually, which was a bit of a strange feeling for myself. He was actually being quite nice and reasonable and relatively calm and everything was going OK. It was fine.

And then two hours of meeting, everything was grand, and we had went into Mr McCallister's office and we were doing the web conferencing thing and we were sort of having a bit of joking back and forward because we were, effectively, on two web cams face to face but face to face –

- C. Mr Bain: Yes.

Mr Macauley: So, that was making a bit of a joke about that.

And then I said something along the lines of, "I will have to make sure to incorporate all of this into the communications strategy" and such. It was at that point when Mr McCrea seemed to, for lack of more eloquent terminology, lose the plot.

He stood up and started shouting and saying, "What do you know about the communications strategy? I am doing this. It's nothing to do with you. Do you even know that I already have one in place? How would you know what we want in it if I haven't told you?"

It was a lot more violent and angry and shouting than the way I portrayed it there. I replied with, "Well, with all due respect, if you haven't shown me this report".

- A. He did allude to it that it was a secret plan. I said, "Well, if you haven't told me about this, how am I meant to know about this and know that you're doing it or know that you want this incorporated in, or in whatever world that this thing exists?"

So, that was that sort of encounter, which started nicely and ended very badly.

Mr Bain: This is described or referred to in the Carecall note as the electoral communication plan that you offered to coordinate.

Mr Macauley: It was the communications plan and how that links in with the election as well but they've just shortened that then to "electoral communications plan".

Mr Bain: All right. And that was the NI21 plan?

Mr Macauley: Yes, it would've been sort of the NI21. It would have been sort of then keying down to even constituency level for both MLAs and such.

- B. Mr Bain: And, hopefully, for candidates and others who were –

Mr Macauley: Possibly as well but it never materialised, so we will never know.

Mr Bain: Sorry, I should have asked you, in relation to this meeting that started in Mr McCrea's office and ended up in Mr McCallister's, for the second part of it was it just you and Mr McCrea present?

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: And the previous meeting that we have talked about that was in Mr McCrea's office, was there anyone else present at that?

Mr Macauley: There was Mr McCrea's assistant, Kirsty McClay, who was present at that. Sort of she was in the room; she wasn't part of the meeting but I would doubt very much that she did not hear what he was saying, as she was sitting about one metre from him at the time.

- C. Mr Bain: OK. This meeting that ended up in Mr McCallister's office, how long before the election did that take place, do you recall?

Mr Macauley: That would have been either in February or March, I think.

Mr Bain: OK.

Mr Macauley: I don't recall the exact date, if I'm honest.

Mr Bain: And I suppose this plan would have been a very important document for a new party.

Mr Macauley: Well, yes. That was like the communications. If you've got a new political party, then policy, communications, membership elections, all these sorts of elements are sort of headlines of what you need to then build on. Then, obviously, there were thousands of sub-categories, little bits and pieces here and there.

- A. But, yes, communications, this sort of secret plan that Mr McCrea seemed to have, well I was never privy to it at any point in time.

Mr Bain: It would be very much something that the party leader would have to have a very a strong input into.

Mr Macauley: Oh yes, I would agree, but as far as I am aware, no one that I have spoken to or know of has ever seen this plan at any level of the party.

I suppose you could ask Mr McCallister as deputy leader and the second most senior member of the party, the party's deputy leader, chief whip, half of the Assembly team, if he's ever seen it, because, if not, then I could imagine it possibly didn't exist.

Mr Bain: Am I right that after that particular meeting you saw very little of Mr McCrea at all?

- B. Mr Macauley: Yes, I saw very little of him generally. He sort of didn't want me in any meetings really. I saw him now and again, and I was at a party executive meeting in an attending capacity, which was in March, I believe, towards the end of March.

Mr Bain: OK, we will come to that in just a minute, if we can.

Mr Macauley: OK.

Mr Bain: You formed the impression, according to the Carecall note, that Mr McCrea didn't like you.

Mr Macauley: Yes, well –

Mr Bain: Did you like him?

- C. Mr Macauley: I didn't – Well, now or then? Now, I'm not his biggest fan, to say the least, after the way he treated me for five months. Then, I thought he was a nice enough individual. I wouldn't have called him a friend or such but I would never have thought of him as an angry person who would be incredibly demeaning to members of staff and flippant about certain things in certain ways.

I just, eh – At the time, prior to my employment, I thought he's a bit aloof but he seems nice enough. Afterwards, I wasn't too fussed on him, to say the least, for what I think quite obvious reasons.

Mr Bain: Yes, and would you agree that everyone is free to like or dislike whoever they want?

Mr Macauley: I would agree with that statement; that's freedom. But your actions towards such persons should not be influenced by how much you like or dislike them. You should treat them with the same respect that you would treat a person that you like.

Mr Bain: OK. Now, you raised the question of party conferences and I just want to come to that. Were these – when you say party conferences –

A. Mr Macauley: It is misread, mistyped in there. It's maybe "committee".

Mr Bain: Yes. Is it a sort of executive committee or management committee or whatever?

Mr Macauley: Yes. That there is one of the mistakes they made. They called it a party conference rather than an executive committee.

Mr Bain: I think you referred to two of them.

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: And at the first one –

Mr Macauley: That was in January.

Mr Bain: – there wasn't really any issues, according to the transcript, the note.

B. Mr Macauley: There were no issues in terms of how Mr McCrea treated anyone. The only issues were his sort of bad management and sort of leadership style and such and disorganisation. Those sorts of elements were the only things, I would say, would be the issues from the first executive meeting that I attended, again in an observing capacity.

Mr Bain: Now, at the second meeting, as I understand it, you were getting a lift from someone called [REDACTED]

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: Who is [REDACTED]?

Mr Macauley: [REDACTED] was a member of the executive committee, one of the four elected members of the executive that were elected at the party conference in November.

Mr Bain: And you had quite a long wait because you had to wait for your lift back, from [REDACTED]'s house, was it?

C. Mr Macauley: Yes, [REDACTED], the chair's house, which is in [REDACTED]. So, the meeting was in [REDACTED]'s house out there and we were all sitting around in the living room on sofas and such and they were going through – it wasn't really much of an agenda. Again, strike to the disorganisation, there were no minutes from the last meeting other than some sort of quickly drafted notes from [REDACTED] herself.

At that meeting, that is whenever they sort of selected the European candidate, which was [REDACTED] – or [REDACTED] I should say, rather.

After a lot of discussion and back and forth of, and then Mr McCrea's input of whether or not they were going to do it or not, and it was up to him, even though it wasn't. I had a lot of involvement in the party constitution, so I sort of knew it wasn't, but by this point I knew, or learned, the best thing to do is if it doesn't directly concern me, I'm not going to intervene because, for instance, if I had said to Mr McCrea, "Actually, no, it's not up to you", he would have went insane.



- A. Now, I'm not saying he didn't but my feeling would be that if I intervene in any way in this meeting, he's going to go ballistic. So, I had, I suppose, a hesitance to input into it because of the way I felt he would react to any input from myself.

Mr Bain: But it would have been quite wrong for you to intervene, wouldn't it anyway, because you were there as an observer at a management meeting.

Mr Macauley: Well, "observer" is – I have likely chosen the wrong word. I was invited specifically to – In the same sort of non-voting capacity as, I suppose, Mr Hutchinson was there –

Mr Bain: Right, OK.

Mr Macauley: – to input but I wouldn't get to vote. Otherwise, there is little point to attending as an observer because you can just read the minutes afterwards as such, unless you are going to input.

But I felt that my input wasn't welcome but that was mainly due to my past experiences with Mr McCrea primarily.

- B. Mr Bain: Was there anything at this second meeting that caused you great concern apart from it being disorganised?

Mr Macauley: Yes. After the meeting came to a close, [REDACTED] was staying behind for a bit, which was OK, basically. Fair enough, if you are getting a lift with someone, you sort of have to be a bit flexible to their requirements, so that's all fine. So, I think she stayed for the best part of another hour or two. I can't remember how long but it was quite a while.

During that time, they were chatting and such. Mr McCrea was sort of talking to me, and so was [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]. At certain points, Mr McCrea was being really patronising to me, condescending pretty much with my view at the time. I see myself as a fairly strong individual to a certain degree but it was quite demoralising and would give someone the feeling that they were worthless in life and in what they do as a job.

- C. There were things like, "Oh, you'll get there some day". He said to me when I was talking about something, "I don't recognise your expertise in this area". He said that a few times, actually, which just is a demoralising thing to be said to someone.

I can say that if I wasn't in the middle of nowhere and waiting for a lift, I likely would have just walked out because – but for the fact that I was 30 miles from Belfast and in the middle of the countryside, I thought the walk might take a while.

Mr Bain: The Carecall note records Mr McCrea saying something along the lines, "You're young, you'll learn but you'll get there".

Mr Macauley: Yes, something like that. It was along that sort of tune of things. I thought it was inappropriate, to say the least, and, as I said, demoralising, condescending and so on and so forth in that sort of stream.

Mr Bain: But would you agree that there's another interpretation, that he was commenting that you were young, which was factually true, by comparison with him at any rate, and you will learn, and it was actually quite an encouraging comment?

- A. Mr Macauley: No. I can see where you are coming from, and if you were to read just a simple transcript of what he said, but a lot of it came from the tone. It also came from the other aspects that he said, and of I don't recognise your expertise in this area, and it alluded back to his treatment of me in the past and how he has been derogatory to me in the past, like shouting at me, swearing at me and such.

When you add that all in together when someone says that to you, there is only one way that you can take it, in that this person is being incredibly condescending and demeaning to you.

Mr Bain: Can I ask you, how did you come to meet with Carecall?

Mr Macauley: I was asked to attend a meeting at their offices in Belfast. It was, eh, –

Mr Bain: By them or by someone else?

- B. Mr Macauley: It was John McCallister had asked me if I wanted to talk to them and I said, yes, I'm happy enough to, that's fine.

Mr Bain: And that was in connection with an allegation of bullying and harassment by Mr McCrea.

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: Did you consider that you'd been the victim of bullying and harassment?

Mr Macauley: Yes, and I stated that. That was the first question Carecall had asked me. If I'd answered "no", they would've closed – There wouldn't be a report.

So, the first question they ask you is, "Do you feel you were bullied and harassed by Mr McCrea?" and my answer was "yes".

Mr Bain: Have you considered taking tribunal action against Mr McCrea?

- C. Mr Macauley: I did consider it but, as time went on, my main thought – and I suppose it's ironic that we're here now – was just to leave it and go on with life as such because I just wanted it all to sort of go away and be done with rather than it could be going on for months, years, and, well, here we are, I suppose, so that really hasn't worked. Maybe I should have.

Mr Bain: Now, before you went to that meeting at the request of Mr McCallister, did you discuss any of your issues with Mr McCrea with anyone?

Mr Macauley: I discussed them with Mr McCallister. He was my line manager and the deputy leader of the party and so on and so forth. He was – Constantly through the period of time, he was, effectively, negotiating – "negotiating" might not be the right word but discussing with Mr McCrea like what they were going to do as they sort of go forward. Every time they would reach an agreement on we will be doing this and myself would be doing x, y and z, when I went to do x, y and z, Mr McCrea had just changed his mind.

- A. So, but for all the effective negotiations between Mr McCallister and Mr McCrea, any time they actually came to an agreement about what way they were going forward, that agreement was, effectively, broken by McCrea in terms of that, which basically made my job nigh impossible to do for a lot of the time.

Mr Bain: In the period between leaving working for Mr McCallister and NI21 and going to Carecall, did you discuss Mr McCrea with anyone?

Mr Macauley: [Interruption due to mobile phone interference] Sorry about that.

Mr Bain: In the period between stopping work for Mr McCallister and NI21 and your meeting with Carecall, had you discussed it with anyone?

Mr Macauley: I believe I was still working for the party at the time. I think it was in May. There's a date there.

Mr Bain: Oh yes, sorry. You're quite right. It was at the end of May, so it was about a fortnight before you left.

- B. Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: It was 16 May.

Mr Macauley: Yes, it was just before the election.

Mr Bain: Had anyone asked you to provide them with a copy of your interview with Carecall?

Mr Macauley: Well, obviously, I gave a copy of it to Mr McCallister. Em –

Mr Bain: Why?

Mr Macauley: I was asked for it. I assume that's how you have it.

Mr Bain: But hadn't Carecall made clear to you that once the report was completed and –

- C. Mr Macauley: The report was never completed.

Mr Bain: But hadn't they made clear to you that, in due course, they would be providing Mr McCallister with a copy of what you said?

Mr Macauley: Yes, they said it would be Mr McCallister, and [REDACTED] as well, to which I said I didn't think that was the best idea. I thought that the report was not finished and that's possibly why I was asked to give a copy. I don't know if they sent an incompleted report copy to Mr McCallister or not but if they didn't, then it would make sense that if he wanted to get them – and he did, I suppose, commission the report and such, and I knew he was going to get it anyway – there was no additional element of passing it to someone who it wasn't meant to sort of go to anyway, as I was aware that John was going to get it.

Of course, now you have it, which you might not otherwise if I hadn't –

Mr Bain: Did you give a copy of it to Annette Holden?



- A. Mr Macauley: Well, Annette works in John's office, so John may have, I believe – Like she is part of his staff and such, so she may be dealing with those elements.

Actually, did I? I might have sent it through to John but Annette may have been dealing with it for him. That might have been it. I don't think so. I might have but I'm not sure, to be honest.

Mr Bain: You got a letter from me.

Mr Macauley: Yes.

Mr Bain: It probably came as a bit of a surprise.

Mr Macauley: No, it wasn't too much of a surprise.

Mr Bain: Have you discussed what you were going to say to me with anyone before coming here today?

- B. Mr Macauley: No. I didn't know what the questions were going to be.

Mr Bain: Would it be fair to say that, in general, the relationship between, on the one hand, Mr McCallister and his staff and Mr McCrea were not the best?

Mr Macauley: Do you mean John's staff and Basil's staff?

Mr Bain: No, I mean leaving out Basil's staff. John's staff and Basil.

Mr Macauley: I would say they weren't fussed on him, and as time progressed, and Mr McCrea's behaviour and management, leadership etc progressed, I could imagine and believe and such, and I got the feeling, that they didn't seem to like him as much as the –

Well, I don't know how the staff like him. Possibly they don't like him, I don't know, but I got the feeling that he was likely not the most beloved leader in history.

Mr Bain: There was talk about him amongst the staff, wasn't there, about what he'd done or allegedly done?

- C. Mr Macauley: I didn't really discuss much. I didn't know much, or I don't pretty much know anything about the allegations in terms of –

Which allegations do you mean, I suppose?

Mr Bain: Just the general word. Wasn't there in the party office and in Mr –

Mr Macauley: Well, yes. In terms of my, eh, sort of how I was treated, I did talk to Annette about it. I called Annette, actually, after a couple of the meetings just because I wanted someone to talk to, I suppose, because it's quite an experience, to say the least, so it's nice to have someone to talk to about it as such.

Whenever I was down in the office, my sort of stuff wasn't really brought up that much. Now and again, I might have mentioned he's still not very nice to me or something like that, he's still swearing at me, things like that, or towards the end I just didn't see him.

- A. Mr Bain: Doubtless, you heard other staff colleagues talking about how he'd behaved, or allegedly behaved, towards them.

Mr Macauley: Yes, but that would all be hearsay, I suppose. But yes, I did hear other people saying how they were stressed and anxious.

I don't recall them ever saying that he was profusely swearing at them as much and such and shouting at them, which I think is one difference. I think he just did that to me. It was so generous of him.

Mr Bain: It is quite normal really, isn't it, for staff to talk among themselves –

Mr Macauley: Sorry, I should say, there's always a – I'll just put on record that in my responses, there's always a tone of jokery as well.

Mr Bain: Oh, yes. No, no –

Mr Macauley: I hope that doesn't come through too strongly in the report because I think it comes through better in a vocal sense than on a written piece of paper.

- B. Mr Bain: No, no, I – But there was nothing unusual about you talking to work colleagues about your experiences or them talking to you?

Mr Macauley: No, no. It was almost like – I never actually said this at the time or at any time but it was almost like a support group, in a way. You were sort of talking and you were sort of getting out there what happened to you, almost what he's done or such this week.

If you have to do that sort of periodically, it is a bit – It just almost lets you push through, almost, and get on with it, sort of get on with the job, rather than almost being crushed by some sort of, I suppose, stress or depression or something that could come from it if you just buried it all down and just kept getting constant abuse.

Mr Bain: Of course, another way of looking at these discussions among staff about Mr McCrea would be to say the staff were talking about him behind his back.

- C. Mr Macauley: Well –

Mr Bain: And that would be true, wouldn't it?

Mr Macauley: Well, technically. From a technical sense, he wasn't in the room, but would you discuss such things with other people if he was, if you felt that you couldn't approach him to –

And I did approach him, as I state. I approached him whenever he called me down to talk about the website. Whenever I tried to approach the topic of how he communicated with me, he got even worse, so how could you negotiate a working relationship with such a man? You sort of have to almost struggle through it as such.

It wasn't very nice and having an outlet to speak to someone about that was invaluable. At the same time, it's important to remember that without that, you could just be sort of crushed by it all. Just sort of –

- A. Mr Bain: Perhaps you could help me with this: one of the complaints made about Mr McCrea is that he talked about individual members of staff with other staff behind their back. I am having just a little difficulty understanding what the difference is.

Mr Macauley: Oh, there is a very big difference.

Mr Bain: Ah, what is it, then?

Mr Macauley: He is leader. He is the employer or the de facto employer as such because he is the leader. Obviously, he's not Annette's employer, for instance, because she worked for John but, de facto, he's the guy at the top.

So, him talking about a member of staff to another member of staff is a breach of trust and a breach of sort of confidentiality. Me talking to a member of staff, for instance, about how I've been treated by Mr McCrea is me seeking help and confiding in someone that I am able to trust.

- B. Mr Bain: But if Mr McCrea had concerns about the performance of a member of staff, how good they were at their job, wouldn't it be perfectly proper for him to speak to other people who worked with that person, and say, "Look, I have this concern about you" and any similar experience?

Mr Macauley: I think that's a fair point but, firstly, you should instigate a formal procedure for doing that or, at least, speak to the person involved in a calm and mannered way rather than screaming at them beforehand, and shouting and swearing at them, and losing your temper any time they talk to you or make a suggestion.

That's just bad management, bad leadership. If Mr McCrea was trying to get to someone, trying to get to a point of trying to find out whether or not someone was doing their job, then he should, at the very least, start with the person in a calm and reasoned way rather than going behind their back to find out if they've been doing their job when, full well, he could be actually the person impeding that person's ability to do their job.

- C. Mr Bain: You will be pleased to know that we are very nearly finished.

Mr Macauley: Oh, we're not doing too badly.

Mr Bain: Other than the various incidents that we've been through today, are there any other particular incidents that you think I should be aware of?

Mr Macauley: Em, let me think here – Sort of, eh – Well, I mean, like there's, eh – Give me a second just to have a thought about it, I suppose.

Well, there is one incident I would bring up, and that was a meeting of basically most of the party and Assembly Member staff, and some volunteers and such. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] John McCallister and other members of the executive were present as well. [REDACTED] was present as well. That was it.

It was at [REDACTED]'s offices in Belfast city centre and we were all sitting around a table. There must have been a good 15 of us in total and we were having a discussion. We were leading up to the elections and, as you can imagine, you might just discuss the election.

- A. So, we were having a discussion about certain aspects and we were talking about council candidates. The meeting was going fine for two hours or so. Mr McCrea had been invited to this and was told what the –

About “all” staff, I would exclude a couple. By the way, I am just sort of saying “all” –

Mr Bain: Sure.

Mr Macauley: – so I would say I think Karen wasn't there; [REDACTED] from Mr McCrea's constituency office; [REDACTED] from John's office. I think everyone else was there other than that, although I could be wrong. If someone says they weren't there, then they weren't there.

So, we were all sitting around and discussing. It was all going fine and Mr McCrea sort of burst into the room. He really does love to burst into rooms rather than just open the door and walk in. The door swings open to a large noise and he sort of jumps through.

- B. It was almost quite a violent way of entering a room, I would say. Of this point, I'd say that when we were sitting in the party office, when that door burst open, there was fear in the room. I know that's hearsay but there was just – the whole room was like –

Any time the door opened, you sort of knew that if it opened a bit gentler and sort of just open and in, it was more likely to be John, and there was no fear there. But when it was Mr McCrea bursting into the room, there was fear that, “What's it going to be now?”

Anyway, back to that other thing. Sorry, a slight tangent there. Back to the other meeting, and Mr McCrea burst into the room, seized the list of candidates on the whiteboard and starts ranting and raving about this is for him to do. That's fair enough; he was invited to the meeting.

- C. Arrived two hours late. He knew what the meeting was about. He claimed he did not know that this was going to be discussed even though everyone else knew what was going to be discussed. Even at that, there were his own staff there. So, he starts ranting and raving about this.

Before, we all left the room to leave Mr McCrea, Mr McCallister, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to discuss for a while.

His first words about the candidates were, “This is the sods. I don't want to offend anyone, especially you, [REDACTED]” – and it was directed at a woman called [REDACTED], who worked for the party for a brief time, or worked for Mr McCrea for a brief time, one of those two anyway – “I don't want to offend anyone, especially you, [REDACTED]” – and [REDACTED] is a black woman – so he said, “Well, on the candidates, we've got a black one, we've got a Chinese one, we've got a wheelchair one – no, wait, we've got two wheelchair ones”.

Now, I wasn't personally offended by that but I just thought: what way do you conduct yourself in life? This is one of the most offensive ways you can put that we have got a diverse selection of candidates.

- A. I think it just sort of sums up his style almost or sums up part of his style almost, that he doesn't seem to give a damn how he treats anyone, how he talks about anyone or how he does any of that stuff.

He talked about those four individuals as tokenistic gestures of a black one, a Chinese one and two wheelchair ones as if that was their only characteristics. That just sums up the kind of person he is.

Mr Bain: OK. Can I ask you, then, about something that appears to have happened at another party meeting that you attended, when there was a question about a donation to the party?

Mr Macauley: Sorry?

Mr Bain: A question about a donation to the party.

- B. Mr Macauley: Oh, sorry, yes, that was at the first executive committee meeting that I attended.

Mr Bain: That's the one that you told Carecall there were no issues at.

Mr Macauley: There were no issues that I could think of from the sort of bullying or harassment aspect.

Mr Bain: I see.

Mr Macauley: There was an issue. I was tasked with writing the minutes of this meeting. I believe I still have a copy of those, if you want them. I'm not sure if – I might have a copy before and after the amendment possibly as well.

- C. I sent the minutes out to either it was all of the executive or it was just what we called the big three: [REDACTED] Basil and John. I think I just sent it to them. I believe Annette then had checked over the minutes and she gave me some pointers on some changes. It was all good and everything, and that was all fine.

But then [REDACTED] came back to me and told me that there was a section about a donation for an app of, I think, £1,000. That was in the minutes because I was there and I wrote that down whenever I was at the meeting.

I don't recall – I don't think I attributed it to anyone specifically. I think it might have been Basil himself; it might say in the minutes. But she asked me to remove that because she said it wasn't discussed.

I thought it had been discussed but as a member of staff and as a non-member of the committee, it wasn't my place to say that, so I changed it and it was up to the members of the committee to correct whenever the minutes were put forward to them. I don't know if they ever were put forward to them because I think they might be the only set of minutes, possibly, that were like officially done maybe or that I can think of.



- A. So, I was asked to remove that section. Annette, who sat on the executive committee, had said to me as well that that was discussed, that was there. I said, "Well, I can't just change it. I have to listen to the chair on this remark." The chair is the one who sort of checks over it and then puts it to the committee and you can bring it up at the next meeting but I don't know if those minutes were ever actually presented to be approved or not.

Mr Bain: Were there any comments made in your presence by Mr McCrea about the donor?

Mr Macauley: Yes, it was – The name's there but it's just – It's – I can sort of picture who it is and he is sort of a – Well, "elderly" is the wrong word but a man in maybe his 60s or so. Aw, it's going to annoy me now, actually, but I do recall being told that – The name is not at the front of my mind right now. It's sort of there. [REDACTED] someone. [REDACTED] –

Mr Bain: Not to worry.

- B. Mr Macauley: Someone, anyway, but that was it. I can't remember the last name. It will likely come to me at some point and I'll just blurt out a name; so, [REDACTED] – No, all I can think of is your name now, so that's not very helpful.

Mr Bain: It wasn't me.

Mr Macauley: Are you sure, now?

Mr Bain: And what was said about [REDACTED], then?

Mr Macauley: Just that – I think it was just that he had gave money for this app to be made for like the iPhone and Android phones. You would then be able to have all the information on the apps, so it would give you updates about what's going on and what events are coming up, all the different social media accounts in one place, all of that sort of stuff.

- C. I think the app was actually done, at least I believe so. I remember seeing a copy of it. I think it was Conor Clements who designed it. At least, I'm pretty sure it was him and I remember him showing me it or showing me a draft version of it anyway, one of those two.

Mr Bain: Was there any issue about who the cheque for the donation had been initially made payable to?

Mr Macauley: I only know from maybe a bit of hearsay but I wasn't sort of privy to that directly.

Mr Bain: And then –

Mr Macauley: Oh wait, no, sorry, apologies. I do recall now. I do actually recall Mr McCrea saying that it was made payable directly to him because it would be easier. Yes, I remember him saying that.

There were some days whenever he actually treated me like a human being and spoke to me like a human being – not very often but now and again.

- A. Mr Bain: So, at this stage, am I right from that that the donation hadn't actually been made – it had been offered? And then Mr McCrea said it would be easier if the cheque was payable to him or are you not sure?

Mr Macauley: I would imagine that the money came in. I don't know as to who it was assigned as a donation.

Mr Bain: OK.

Mr Macauley: I believe it was meant to be to the party but it was made payable to Mr McCrea because it would be easier that way. At least, that is I think what happened but, again, it could be a mixture of my memories of what he said at that meeting and a little bit of hearsay. So, on the accuracy of that, I can't be 100%.

Mr Bain: In particular, do you recall Mr McCrea using words about [REDACTED] to the effect that he was –

- B. Mr Macauley: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Mr Bain: [REDACTED] Do you recall Mr McCrea using words about [REDACTED] to the effect that he was senile, mistaken and suffering from dementia?

Mr Macauley: No, I don't.

Mr Bain: Then can I ask you about one last matter? Was there an issue between you and Mr McCrea about the NI Youth Twitter account?

Mr Macauley: Yes. Well, not so much an issue. I set it up and handed it over to Jacquelyn, who was dealing with the youth wing of the party. It went very successfully and they got over 1,000 followers within a couple of months. It seemed to be quite successful.

Mr Bain: But wasn't there a difficulty with some very inappropriate things being put in the account?

- C. Mr Macauley: That was towards the end, I think. Are you thinking of whenever some of the members of the executive posted elements of that they were supporting John and such? That might be what they're alluding to.

I didn't have any access to the Twitter account at that time. Actually, I was disconnected from their briefing in that respect. I wasn't allowed access to any social media elements. E-mail lists were a lot of the time restricted, so I could only see selected sections of them. I was just sort of kept at arm's length and that made it impossible to do my job.

On that disconnect or ability to do my job, I requested access to the Facebook page and such and I was given that and that was put on. Within 15 minutes, Mr McCrea had told his staff to take me off access to it and that I wasn't allowed to access it, and no one was allowed to access it without his say so in the future. So, I wasn't able to access any of that stuff as well there.

- A. Mr Bain. Thank you. That's all been very helpful. Is there anything further you wish to say to me that you think would help me in my investigation?

Mr Macauley: Em – Let me think here – Nothing that comes to mind.

Mr Bain: Well, thank you very much. That concludes the interview and we'll send you the transcript. Quite when it will be will depend on the good offices of others to do the transcription for us and this isn't at the top of their priority list.

Mr Macauley: All right.

- B. Mr Bain: But we will get it out to you as soon as we can. I understand you are going to be indisposed in any event for a little while.

Mr Macauley: I will be sort of laid up with a minor operation just but it won't be very long.

Mr Bain: Well, you can look forward to reading this. It will keep you occupied.  
[Laughter] Thank you very much for coming in. I really appreciate that.

Mr Macauley: No problem at all.





INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

DB 46

**Complaint Against:**

**Basil McCrea MLA**

**Witness:**

**Peter Hutchinson**

**Date:**

**25 November 2014**

**Place:**

**Room 283, Parliament Buildings**

**Present:**

**Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner**

**[REDACTED], Notetaker**

**Peter Hutchinson**

**Time Started:**

**10.33 am**

**Time Ended:**

**11.02 am**

A. **Douglas Bain:** OK. As – as you'll see, Mr Hutchinson, we're – we're recording this.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** And – and first of all, thank you for coming. And I think, as I indicated in my notice to you, I was taking all the evidence on oath in this particular investigation. Are you content to take an oath?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

B. **Douglas Bain:** Would you – would you take the bible in your right hand, then, please, and read the words of the witness oath?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah. I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**Douglas Bain:** Thank you very much. And just for the record, this is, uh, the interview of Peter Hutchinson, taking place in room 283 in Parliament Buildings on – what's today's date?

**[REDACTED]:** This is the twenty-fifth.

C. **Douglas Bain:** On 25 November 2014, and the time is now 10.33. Uh, present are Douglas Bain, the Standards Commissioner; **[REDACTED]**, a note-taker; and your name is?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Peter Hutchinson.

**Douglas Bain:** Thank you. Just helps the transcriber.

**Peter Hutchinson:** No problem.

**Douglas Bain:** And just to finish off the formalities, Mr Hutchinson, can you confirm that you received from me a notice outlining the procedure for the interview – for the investigation, and giving details of various offences in relation to giving evidence?

**A. Peter Hutchinson:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** And do you have any questions on that?

**Peter Hutchinson:** No.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. Can I – uh, and I don't think this will take us very long – uh, just try and get my mind round the background to this, all right? You worked for John McCallister while he was in the UUP, on a sort of part-time basis.

**Peter Hutchinson:** No, I didn't work for John McCallister directly. I worked – I was a – I was employed by the UUP in, I think, late 2007, if my memory serves me right, as a researcher and a policy officer.

**B. Douglas Bain:** All right, you're a party worker.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah. And then I was there for three and a half years and sort of ended up being their sort of policy adviser. Um, and then I left in 2011 and went and worked for NICVA.

**Douglas Bain:** And I assume that while you were working as a researcher for UU – the UUP, you came across John McCallister from time to time?

**Peter Hutchinson:** John and Basil, yes.

**C. Douglas Bain:** And then you went away to work, uh, in the voluntary sector.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** And you came back, uh, to work at Parliament Buildings for NI21.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** And was that in August of 2013?

**Peter Hutchinson:** It was, uh, July. Late July. Sort of July.

**A. Douglas Bain:** OK.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** And who – who – how did you come to come back?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, I was literally contacted by John, uh, and asked if I would consider coming back and working for NI21. I'll be honest – at the start I was quite reticent about coming back. I sort of had left politics, uh, but the concept of the party and the politics of it I very much agreed with. It's always flattering to be asked. Um, and I had a number of – I had a meeting with John. I had a meeting with – I had a couple meetings with John and Basil. We talked through some stuff, and I made the decision that I would come back and work for NI21.

**B. Douglas Bain:** OK. And what was your role when you came back?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, my role was, uh, head of policy, uh, which would have effectively, in my – my understanding of it, would have been to look after the day-to-day Assembly business of the party – the – and our two MLAs, sort of advising on lines, on – on speeches, on – on motions, on legislation, plus aspects of policy development, uh, and manifesto development for the party.

**Douglas Bain:** And when you came back, was Alan – was there an Alan Patterson, uh, working with NI21?

**C. Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, I mean, when I first arrived in NI21, I must admit it wasn't exactly how I expected it to be. Um, Alan was thereabouts. He was – seemed to be working out of Basil's office. I never really fully understood his role and, uh, how – where it fitted. Um, and it, I mean, my memory of that period is not wonderful, but in my mind I – when I arrived, he wasn't there for very long. Uh, he seemed to be trying to get people roles, uh, within Basil's office and – which seemed to sort of, at points, spread into my office as well, which, um, wasn't, yeah, how I thought it would be.

**Douglas Bain:** You see, he – he's been described as, uh, head of policy for NI21.

**A. Peter Hutchinson:** Well, that would be news to me.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. Uh, and did he stop working on a regular basis at Parliament Buildings shortly after you took up post?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, as I said, my memory of that is not – because I worked out of a different office. Um, but yes, I think he did – it wasn't very long after I was there that he stopped.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, can you help me – the office you worked in, then, was the NI21 party office at Stormont?

**B. Peter Hutchinson:** Yes, that – that is true, but up until, uh – oh, I can't – up until a certain point of round the new year, we didn't have a party office.

**Douglas Bain:** Right.

**Peter Hutchinson:** So we worked out of John McCallister's office, Fiona and I, for the first part, which was a – a small office – very small office on the right-hand side of the building on the – the – the third floor. So that was – it was John's office, but he didn't really use it very much, so Fiona and I worked out of it. But it was the party office. That was the – sort of its term.

**C. Douglas Bain:** Uh, and during that period, then, we're talking from July/August –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** – through till, what did you say? Around Christmastime?

**Peter Hutchinson:** I think it was around Christmastime or the new year we got the office upstairs.

**Douglas Bain:** Uh, was, uh, Basil McCrea's office near to John's office at that time?

**A. Peter Hutchinson:** Yes. Yes, it was just down the corridor.

**Douglas Bain:** Were they adjoining, in fact?

**Peter Hutchinson:** No.

**Douglas Bain:** No, they weren't.

**Peter Hutchinson:** No. Basil's adjoins to [REDACTED]

**Douglas Bain:** Right. And how much contact did you have, then, during that period up till Christmas, with Basil and his own staff?

**B. Peter Hutchinson:** With Basil, uh, we tried to arrange – I mean, I would be in constant contact with Basil on Assembly business, on the business of the party, on policy issues. We would attempt to hold a Monday morning meeting, um, to go through the business of the Assembly and any issues – issues that were arising. So that would be a set meeting – didn't always happen. Um, and throughout the days – throughout the business, we would be in constant discussions about what we would be doing. We then tried to implement a Wednesday meeting, as well, to sort of – sort of pre-empt the policy work for the next week, so we'd be a little bit ahead of ourselves. I think that – we started trying to do that around, again, the Christmastime and the new year when we moved up.

**C.** Again, they didn't always happen, but – so, I mean, I had good regular contact with Basil. Um, with Basil's staff, I didn't have – I mean, I would be in their office. I would be thereabouts. Did I have much contact with the work they were doing? Not a significant amount. It, uh – it seemed to be much more focused on the workings of the party.

**Douglas Bain:** And did – did you personally see or hear anything that you thought was unusual between Basil and any of his staff?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, personally I couldn't say I saw anything, uh, that I found concerning or alarming in – per se, directly.

- A. I mean, there was a significant amount of – I will say that whenever I arrived, there was a significant amount of very young people, and there was a great turnover of people, and I'm not sure how conducive I ever thought it was to us building and functioning as a – as a professional organisation. Um, I mean, I – I suppose I think some of the relationship he had with people like Kirsty I – I could see from a distance that I'm not sure how – how healthy I would consider some of that. They were – you know, they did things extremely much together, and etc and so forth, and that –

**Douglas Bain:** But there was nothing that caused – as you said, that caused you concern, other than the efficiency of the operation?

- B. **Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah. I mean – yeah. It – it always seemed extremely coming and going. Uh, slightly, you know, dysfunctional, to use that term. Um, but I had no first-hand sight or knowledge of anything that was, uh, untoward.

**Douglas Bain:** Now, uh, I think some time after you, uh, started working for the party, Nigel Macauley joined.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** Is that right?

- C. **Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** And was his area IT?

**Peter Hutchinson:** The – what Nigel was employed to do was, uh – I'm not – was never fully and clearly defined, in my mind. Um, I think he was there to help the party develop, uh, a – its communications, um, and to gear it up towards an election.

**Douglas Bain:** Right.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, effectively helping to develop a strategy for – for moving towards an election.



A. **Douglas Bain:** So, communications with a view to involve social media –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Oh, and definitely much communications, with –

**Douglas Bain:** – and website.

**Peter Hutchinson:** – website, communications – communications with the party, with potential candidates, to help them get – and the party get developed towards an election. That – whether that actually happened, I don't – I don't think it did.

**Douglas Bain:** Uh, were you present at a meeting shortly after –

B. **Peter Hutchinson:** Yes.

**Douglas Bain:** – you started, and I think –

**Peter Hutchinson:** I –

**Douglas Bain:** – I think Basil had been on holiday, and came back.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Basil had been on holiday. He came back. Nigel had been employed. Yes, I was present at – at that meeting.

C. **Douglas Bain:** Uh, and who else was present at that meeting?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, it was myself, um, [REDACTED] and Basil. And Fiona McAteer had been in the office -- because it was – we had – it was held in the central office, which – we then did have an office, and she left for the duration of the meeting.

**Douglas Bain:** OK. And how long did that, uh, meeting go on for?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Oh, I would be struggling to recall the exact duration, but it was a quite – a – it was a – it wasn't a, you know, 20-minute meeting. It was probably up to 40 minutes, an hour, I think. Um, but again, I'm – my memory doesn't serve me wonderfully on that.

A. **Douglas Bain:** No. Well – but it wasn't just a casual meeting.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh-uh.

**Douglas Bain:** Uh, and what was – what did you understand, if you did, what the purpose the meeting was?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Well, it was actually – I was – it seemed to me that there was, uh, a bit – quite a lot of tension had arisen out of Nigel coming and working for us. I had actually suggested that we have a meeting. I had hoped that we would have a meeting with John, Basil and [REDACTED] John unfortunately couldn't make it.

B. The meeting then went ahead. Um, and I had hoped that it would be – uh, clear the air, let's figure out what our issues are and – so we can move forward. Um, it wasn't really – that's not really how the meeting panned out. Um –

**Douglas Bain:** Uh, was there an issue about, uh, a job description that, uh, Nigel had been given?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah. Yeah, there was.

**Douglas Bain:** And what was the issue about that?

C. **Peter Hutchinson:** Um, Basil was very unhappy with it. And I think Basil, um, uh, Nigel had tweeted something or said something – that he was the director of communications. I think that was as much, uh, the problem as, uh, anything else. Um, but, yeah, my memory is there was an issue with, uh, the job description. Basil was unhappy with it, uh, and he was unhappy with the – Nigel being there in general.

**Douglas Bain:** And was that – did you understand that, uh, Nigel had been recruited, uh, in Basil's absence and without his knowledge?

A. **Peter Hutchinson:** I – I didn't have a significant understanding of – of how Nigel was recruited, but it was – it was my understanding that [REDACTED] was fully aware and had okayed his – his appointment. Uh, it had been in discussion for a considerable period of time that we needed someone, um, and it was evident that there was a – conversations going round in circles, and we weren't going anywhere, doing anything. Um, and – yeah, but I was aware – well, I mean, obviously aware at the time. Basil was, you know, railing against it – that he had – he was unhappy and hadn't been fully informed about what had gone on. But in my mind, that wasn't Nigel's fault, and Nigel was getting a pretty harsh time. Which is kind of not what I had hoped would be the purpose of the meeting. And I was pretty, I must say, disappointed in the fact that I was under the impression that [REDACTED] had OKed this employment and was therefore – if there was some culpability in – in the manner in which he was employed, she was culpable as well, but therefore was seemingly participating in sort of having a go at Nigel, who had just been employed.

B. **Douglas Bain:** Well, was one of the issues, uh, that Mr McCrea considered that the job description was so – so extensive that no person, however competent, could – could deal with everything that was on it?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yes. That was an issue, yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** So to that extent, um –

C. **Peter Hutchinson:** But that wasn't really the issue. I mean, in my mind, job descriptions – I mean, my – my job description was pretty – I mean, pretty broad and pretty basic. Um, I mean, your job description is very rarely the job you do – you know, you're going to do on a daily basis. To me, I – I felt that, OK, it may have been an extensive job description, but the job that – that there – he was there to do – the skills that he could potentially bring to us, you could utilise and maximise in – in the way that you saw fit. It could have been a discussion and a – and an arrangement that could have been come to that – OK, that job description is not exactly what we had wanted, therefore we could have something – we could direct you to do what we need you to do. And there was an element with Basil that he – actually you're jogging my memory. Um, uh – that it was sort of an affront to him. Uh, you know, "Why don't you just do my job?" type attitude. You know. And – yeah.

- A. **Douglas Bain:** So do I take from that Basil was – Mr McCrea was giving the impression that, as party leader, it was really for him to decide on certain approaches to how the party was put forward in the media, and he thought that, uh –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah –

**Douglas Bain:** – Mr Macauley was sort of impeding or –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah, but – but at that point –

- B. **Douglas Bain:** – encroaching on his role?

**Peter Hutchinson:** But at that point, Nigel hadn't done anything. That's my point. I mean, that's why the meeting was being held. There was obviously an issue with – with – with the manner in which Nigel had been employed, and with what he was being asked to do. But he hadn't done anything yet, and subsequently didn't do anything.

**Douglas Bain:** And –

**Peter Hutchinson:** So, I mean, I – in my mind – it was clear we needed an additional person. That was a discussion that was had at – at a point above my head. They – they had reached agreement. A decision was made. Rightly or wrongly, there was a – in my view, a means to sort it out in a productive manner, and that wasn't chosen.

- C. **Douglas Bain:** Right. And I think you've used the phrase that Mr McCrea was "having a go" at Mr Macauley. What form did that "having a go" take?

**Peter Hutchinson:** He was a – well, there were – there were raised voices. Um, I'm struggling to remember the exact words that were used, but he was definitely angry, and, um, that – I mean, the impression I got that he was blaming Nigel for the fact that he was there. Um, which to me was sort of not the source of – of the potential issue. And it was – the – he was angry. He – there were raised voice, and – yeah, that was the overriding impression from the meeting, without having a sort of – a very great, detailed memory of what exactly was said.

A. **Douglas Bain:** So, uh, I suppose if the meeting had been absolutely horrendous, with, uh, foul language used and shouting –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** – you'd have remembered that?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Oh, yeah. No, I mean, there was – there was shouting, and there was raised voices. It was a very unpleasant meeting.

**Douglas Bain:** And was there abusive language?

B. **Peter Hutchinson:** Uh –

**Douglas Bain:** Or – or was it the tone that was abusive?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Um –

**Douglas Bain:** Or do you not have a recollection?

**Peter Hutchinson:** I don't – I don't have a recollection of – of the language being used, but I – I have a strong memory of being – it being extremely uncomfortable, and being extremely – feeling an – extremely drained afterwards. Uh –

C. **Douglas Bain:** And other than, uh, that particular meeting, did you see any similar, uh, conduct by Mr McCrea at any time during the period working in the party?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, I have no, um – no, um – what am I saying? I mean, John and

Basil would have had the odd, uh, head-to-head together where there'd be raised –

**Douglas Bain:** Which – which was natural.

**Peter Hutchinson:** – raised voices. Um, nothing that I saw personally – Basil has a – sometimes a great way of making you feel extremely uncomfortable. His conversations go one way, and one way only.

- A. Uh, it's not – it was never a scenario where you had open and frank conversations that you – you felt comfortable in saying what you thought. Um, which, when you work in the line of work that I do – that can sometimes be difficult.

**Douglas Bain:** Well, I mean, that – well, some people might characterise that as a criticism of his management style.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** But no going beyond that.

- B. **Peter Hutchinson:** Absolutely. I – I could take that, but from my point of view, in the context of what we're looking at, you know – I mean, I'm sure you might get on to it. You sort of add it up, um – yeah. There were elements of it I was extremely unhappy with by the end.

**Douglas Bain:** Yeah, but from what you've told me that – from what you personally saw, there was just one incident, and then you didn't, uh, greatly care for his management style, but you didn't see anything towards other members of staff.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah, I mean – I – I think – I think, uh, management style is – is, uh, I think, painting it in the light of – just calling it a management style is – I – I mean, I would – if I worked in – in another organisation and meeting like that had taken place, I would be profound – you know, I'd be profoundly unhappy.

- C. I think there is an element of, well, this is politics and – and, you know, you can push the boundaries slightly. And I'm not sure that's – to describe that just as management style – I think it might have been slightly more than a management style problem.

**Douglas Bain:** But it was just one meeting that – as far as you're concerned.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah. Yeah, but, as I say, there was an element within and working around NI21 that was profoundly uncomfortable. There was – there was never a sense of openness and transparency and honesty in the working environment. And it was, you know, a huge part of what – the – the workings of it seemed to be driven by almost paranoia.

A. **Douglas Bain:** Did – did you ever speak to Mr McCrea about, uh, the way he was behaving towards you? Ever make any complaint to him?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, the only time I raise an issue was after a meeting – well, I call it a meeting. It wasn't really a meeting. After he and [REDACTED] were in [REDACTED] and my office, uh, in and around the time that, uh, this was all kicking off. And I had a profound sense that we were being inadvertently accused of things, and – and we were being, um, sort of almost pressurised to – to sort of talk to them. It's hard to describe, but the – the language and the way that they were talking about other issues in our – in our presence, um, made me feel that we were under accusation of something, and we were being sort of primed to provide information –

B. **Douglas Bain:** Now, just – just to put this in context, is this after the – in early May of 2014 –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** – after various leaks had, uh –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yes. This – this –

**Douglas Bain:** – appeared in the paper?

C. **Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah, this was when it was – it was apparent that, you know, um, something was – was happening, and, um – and, I mean, that was the one time, sort of after that meeting I – I said to Basil I was very unhappy with the fact that we were there in that room and being made to feel the way we were being made to feel.

**Douglas Bain:** But just so I'm – I'm understanding this correctly, this was, uh, after, uh – after leaks that were certainly not helpful to the party and Mr McCrea had appeared in the media, and Mr McCrea and [REDACTED] were trying to find out the source of the leaks. Is that right?



A. **Peter Hutchinson:** Well, I mean, I don't know of any leaks that were from, you know – a leak is, uh, something that is coming from the inside of something. In my mind, my understanding of the situation at that stage was that [REDACTED] was tweeting stuff, and Basil had written him a legal letter. And, uh, then there was rumours circulating, um, from outside of the organisation – I think John McCallister had informed me he was phoned by a constituent that said he was aware that there was a story going to break about sexually inappropriate behaviour. So I'm – you know, to me, I don't know whether you would describe that as a leak. But this – the overriding sense I got was that Basil was very, very strongly trying to find out who these people were, in a way that I didn't think was appropriate. And at the same time, [REDACTED] was trying to distance herself from ever having anything to do with the people who were potentially involved, whilst at the same time talking to them. So –

B. **Douglas Bain:** I mean, it would be natural for Mr McCrea to try and find out who was putting out this information. You don't agree with the way he did it, but would you agree that it was perfectly normal for him to try and find out the source of [REDACTED] information?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Well, my personal opinion is I have no idea why they bothered with him. It – you know, up until the point of this all breaking out, I just could not grasp why they continued to engage with this guy. So I – my – my feeling is no, I don't think it was a reasonable reaction. I think if – if – if this was just some guy being – spouting stuff off on Twitter, just ignore it. Get on with the politics. Get on with building a political party and putting out a message.

C. If this – you know, so it almost became this thing that just consumed everyone, and to me that was, you know – it was disproportionate, and the manner in which I and Fiona McAteer were brought in and gone – asked to go through a list of names of potential people this could be. I mean, I wouldn't expect – if there's issues and rumours around that in any other workplace, I wouldn't expect my boss to bring me in and go, "Is it that person? Is it that person? Do you think it might be that person?" I mean, I don't – I wouldn't – I don't think that would be, you know, behaviour that – it certainly made me feel profoundly uncomfortable.

**Douglas Bain:** And did you consider that misconduct at the time by Mr McCrea, or simply something you thought was not appropriate?



**A. Peter Hutchinson:** Do I – did I think what he – the way he was acting towards me was misconduct, or what –

**Douglas Bain:** Yes. Yes, towards you.

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh, I mean, political parties are strange things. There are – the normal processes and protocols of a professional workplace often don't exist. And in NI21 they certainly didn't exist. Um, and whether I would think it was misconduct under what you're investigating, I – I'm not – in and of itself, no.

**B. Douglas Bain:** Well, or – or under employment law?

**Peter Hutchinson:** Uh –

**Douglas Bain:** Or bullying or harassment?

**Peter Hutchinson:** I'm – I'm not sure. I think that would have to be for someone else to decide.

**Douglas Bain:** In any event, you didn't decide to – to test it.

**C. Peter Hutchinson:** No, I – I didn't decide to test it. I – I wouldn't have decided – I mean, I said in my Carecall statement that, you know, I was here to report what I had been told and what I had seen in the – the situation that had panned out for me. I mean, to me, I was never the – a major victim in this situation, or the source of any major complaint over and above it was one of the most bizarre and regrettable experiences I've gone through.

**Douglas Bain:** And, as regards the relationship between John McCallister and Basil McCrea – I mean, you've said that occasionally they had, uh –

**Peter Hutchinson:** Yeah.

**Douglas Bain:** – disagreements, and that voices were raised. Was that raised on both sides?

**A. Peter Hutchinson:** Yes, yes, yes.

**Douglas Bain:** And you didn't think anything particularly unusual about that, with two MLAs from the same party having disagreements?

**Peter Hutchinson:** No, I – I wouldn't think, uh, MLAs having a disagreement is – is particularly, um, problematic or out of the ordinary. Um, that, for me – two MLAs having a – a barney over certain issues is OK. The problem with NI21 was not those individual instances. It was, for me, the fact that it was a bit out of control. It – it didn't have any structures. It didn't follow any protocol. It – and then anyone who tried to instil that or to question it was pushed. And that – to me, when you put it all in the round and in the balance was what was, for me, very concerning and difficult – that there were people in this situation who had nowhere, really, to go and no one to talk to, because the thing had no means to deal with anything, because it wasn't a properly functioning and structured organisation. And, I mean, that was, for me, the – the most unpleasant thing about it, as well, because it was a sense of helplessness, almost, and being out of control.

**B. Douglas Bain:** Yeah, I – I – I understand, uh, your position. Now that, uh, is all I need to ask you. Is there anything you – you think I should have asked you that I haven't, or anything you want to, on reflection, change?

**Peter Hutchinson:** I mean, you – you have my – my – my Carecall statement. As I say, I don't think it's a wonderful reflection of the – the statement I gave to them. Um, but no, the only thing I would add is – is again a reiteration that this – this thing consumed NI21, and it – it didn't – it didn't have anything to deal with it, and it seemed that, as I said before, some people were wanting to distance themselves from the role they may have had with members of staff, whilst at the same time others were trying very hard to find out who or what this was, and the people in the middle were scared, for want of a better word. And that's why I've found – that's why I, at a certain point, went – said, "I'm uncomfortable and I'm not happy with this any more." And –

**Douglas Bain:** OK. OK. Well, at that stage, then, we'll terminate, uh, the interview, and the time is now 11.02.



Bain, Douglas

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 27 August 2015 16:31  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** RE: NI 21 staff

Mr Bain

Nigel Macauley was employed by both NI21 and Mr McCallister for the period in question i.e. 13/01/2014 to 31/05/2015. The cost split however was 60% NI21 FAPP and 40% Mr McCallisters OCE.

Kind regards  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Pay Team | Northern Ireland Assembly | [REDACTED] | Parliament Buildings | Ballymiscaw  
| Stormont | Belfast | BT4 3XX [REDACTED]

**From:** Bain, Douglas  
**Sent:** 27 August 2015 16:19  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** NI 21 staff

You may recall that you very kindly provided me with a note of the employment dates of staff employed by NI21, Basil McCrae and John McCallister. I regret that I have a query regarding one of these, Nigel Macauley.

In your note he is shown as being employed by NI21 from 13/01/2014 till 31/05/2014. I have been told that he was employed jointly by Mr McCallister and NI21 and that his employment costs were paid 60% from McCallister's OCE and 40% from NI21 FAPP.

Grateful if you could advise me whether that is correct.

Douglas



*Appendix (AM)**Interview Record*

**Case reference number:** NI21 002-05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Ashleigh Murray (AM)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 11.45am  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), [REDACTED], Karen  
Tabahe (KT), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), John McCallister  
(JMcC), Complainant B (CB).

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1** [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2** The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
  - [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

**2.0 Opening Comments**

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- 2.1 Background:-  
Provided [REDACTED] with a written statement.  
AM is 23 years old. Met BMcC through Princes Trust where she was a Young Ambassador. BMcC presented her with a Certificate (Refer to 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph of Statement). He met AM at events where she spoke, he knew about her past, [REDACTED]
- 2.2 Met at a roundtable event in February 13, BMcC pulled AM to the side and offered her a job, no structure or role discussed. AM thought it was admin. AM went to his offices at Stormont to meet him three times – he was never there. His PA gave AM shredding to do – this was unpaid.

### 3.0 Detail of Allegations

- 3.1 Copies of Facebook screenshots passed to [REDACTED] detailing first correspondence. Note: one of the screenshots 01/09/13 18:36 "Nice profile pic". Previous messages to this were sent between 1am-2am
- 3.2 On the day AM left, BMcC went to Facebook and deleted all responses he had sent.
- 3.3 Notes on BMcC's computer were found of AM. Copies provided of Screenshots from Computer sent to AM by CB, they were of AM's public profile comments, messages and correspondence.
- 3.4 Started working in March 2013 in a voluntary capacity. Left November 2013. AM could work up to 60 hours a week on a voluntary capacity, this caused breakdown of relationship, AM treated like sh\*t.
- 3.5 AM advised that BMcC said he would destroy her.
- 3.6 [REDACTED] asked AM to focus on incidents where it started to get inappropriate [REDACTED] read AM's report dated 5<sup>th</sup> May)
- 3.7 **Example:**  
Money in cabinet in unlocked room – missing. Searched entire building and asked all staff. BMcC admitted it was him. AM alerted BMcC & [REDACTED] of unlocked door issue, it was AM who fixed lock as no one else would.
- 3.8 **Example:**  
In Statement AM states that BMcC "Felt me up in private and made advances" (Page 2)  
AM advised that he would touch her backside and legs and make derogatory comments. This was always in private in the office or car.
- 3.9 Staff did notice (KT & FMcA), they called her the travelling PA. BMcC drove and AM sat in passenger seat, he touched her. AM felt uncomfortable, felt she had no choice, that she had to accept it – AM had no job, living alone in rented accommodation and on jobseekers.
- 3.10 **Example:**  
[REDACTED] refers to statement on page 3 regarding incident in the car. BMcC was driving, he was touching AM her legs, and he was crossing over the lines on the road. Police pulled him over.
- 3.11 **Example:**  
[REDACTED] refers to meeting in LaMon detailed in the statement (April 2013)  
This was pre NI21, meeting was set up to discuss party, and it was a 2 day event where alcohol was consumed.  
BMcC asked AM to collect something from his room, then followed her to the room and dropped his trousers and made advance at her. At first AM laughed.  
BMcC pulled down tights and pulled up her dress. AM advises it was not attempted rape but it wasn't nice. AM said no, he stopped. They went back downstairs.  
AM would describe herself as having had a few drinks but sober, and BMcC was very drunk.  
Back to event at LaMon next day, nothing was said.  
AM is 100% sure there was no sexual content of any kind.





JMcC & FMcA were both there.

asked how this made AM feel – AM felt disgusted and trapped, she has no GCSEs, she is renting and supporting her partner, she was trying to get a career. Looking back now she feels she was sexually harassed and mentally abused.

asked AM if she was upset, AM reported that she was shocked but not visibly upset. She told friend but they are not willing to come forward.

3.12 **Example:**

[REDACTED]

3.13 **Example:**

[REDACTED]

3.14 **Example:**

refers to page 3 of statement where AM reports that BMcC “Shouting at me”. “Disrespecting me in front of other people & Staff” and “Giving me menial tasks”

3.15 **Example:**

They were at a meeting at the MAC with 8-12 others, It was a table discussion (and KT were there), BMcC spoke and AM made a joke. BMcC snapped and said he was out of line.

3.16 **Example:**

Menial Tasks – BMcC advised AM to go through 400 emails but after she had done all the work, he wouldn't do anything further.

3.17 **Example:**

Girl with anorexia, he promised her support. AM met her, he did nothing. Refused to go to constituency, “not important and don't count”

3.18 **Example:**

B was reported by DK in Stormont re shouting from rooms. People don't want a room near him.

3.19 **Example:**

Timesheet

AM worked whatever hours BMcC wanted in the beginning, she doesn't drive and always advised BMcC that the earliest bus was the 9.30am bus from [REDACTED] and the earliest she could get to Lisburn was 10.25am. He said 10.30am was fine.

3.20 **Example:**

Then AM was issued a contract with 10am start on it. AM explained that she couldn't do 10am. BMcC began telling staff that AM was not pulling her weight. BMcC was causing office politics.

AM got a taxi one Friday to deliver Timesheets, BMcC asked what time she got in. He was waiting at bus stop to see what time AM left.

3.21 **Example:**

AM got call from KT asking that she was to phone from the office landline each morning and evening to document times coming in and going. AM asked for a meeting, she advised BMcC it was harassment and she was not standing for it, said she was happy to use an appropriate system but not to be treated different from other staff. asked what prompted AM to do this.

3.22 AM advised that she had had enough



She left in November 2013 and took a job in a call centre, she is no longer involved with the party.

Then she started receiving messages on Facebook from [REDACTED] and Conor Clements asking if she was the leak – she did nothing. BMcC and [REDACTED] have been asking colleagues and friends for months. As a result, AM sent a group text to [REDACTED] and BMcC asking about it, they both said they didn't know, [REDACTED] replied first. AM threatened to go to a solicitor for defamation of character

When she got a message on the 11<sup>th</sup> May asking if she was the leak, she had had enough. She made an appointment and saw Newsletter on Tuesday 12/05/14 and met JMcC on Wednesday.

- 3.23 Feeling mentally and physically abused on a daily basis for months. AM wants others to understand that BMcC abuses his power all the time with staff and with all other people. He manipulates people. He doesn't abide by the law.
- 3.24 AM reports the rooms in office were cold, they begged for heat. AM wrote a letter. Temperature was below the legal temperature, BMcC did nothing and told them to put more clothes on.
- 3.25 AM contact Number: [REDACTED] (leave message if she doesn't answer as she can't answer at work)
- 3.26 AM has not reported this before now for fear of people not believing her or thinking of her as a naive girl.
- 3.27 AM also asked to note [REDACTED] is well in there with BMcC, [REDACTED] is aware of BMcC groping CB.

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:****Basil McCrea****Witness:****BASIL McCREA****Date:****29<sup>th</sup> September 2015****Place:****Room 283, Parliament Buildings****Present:****Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
Basic McCrea****Time Started:****14.12 pm****Time Ended:****14.23 pm**

A. **McCREA:** You'll be pleased to know I have no papers with me at all. Normally I come in and throw paper around, I have nothing.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** Right, this is the further interview of Basil McCrea in connection with the complaints against him taking place in Room 283, Parliament Buildings on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015 and the time is now 14.12. Mr McCrea, may I remind you you are still on oath.

**McCREA:** Certainly.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** And just for the formalities, can you confirm that you have received from me an email setting out the purpose of today's interview?

**McCREA:** I can confirm that.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** And that on a previous occasion you have received from me a note explaining the procedure for this interview?

**McCREA:** I have indeed.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** And do you have any questions about that?

**McCREA:** No, I am happy to proceed.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** As you know, what I am going to cover today is the complaint, the complaints of misconduct by you towards Karen Tabahe. You will recall that we dealt with them at a previous interview but they had failed to record.

**McCREA:** Okay.

G. **COMMISSIONER:** Dealing first with the complaint by Mr McCallister with regards to your conduct towards Karen, can I just try and get some background. Am I right in thinking that Mrs Tabahe started working for you as a PA in November 2009?

**McCREA:** That would be correct, yes.

H. **COMMISSIONER:** And that she is still working for you?

A.

**McCREA:** She is indeed.

B.

**COMMISSIONER:** And so she was working for you during what must have been quite an interesting period in the spring of 2013 when you were subject to a disciplinary inquiry by the UUP and in early March resigned from the UUP?

C.

**McCREA:** Yes, it was a fairly difficult period, obviously. Nobody likes to go through disciplinary proceedings and there was a fair amount of stress in the working environment.

D.

**COMMISSIONER:** And I think following your resignation there was all the work in considering the formation of a new party and ultimately the launch of NI21?

E.

**McCREA:** Yes, and it was a fairly chaotic period. There wasn't a plan as such, it wasn't that this was what's going to happen and then you started to execute, you know, a procedure actually. There was quite a lot of questions about whether we should form a new party and if so on what basis. Maybe it would be better to be independent, so whatever, and there was a quite a lot of input from quite a lot of people. So quite chaotic without being... you know, there was purpose to what we were doing but there was no plan.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** And would we say that must also then have been a busy time for Karen?

**McCREA:** Oh absolutely. I mean, you know, Karen had come to work with me because I had helped her out previously with some issues that she had and so she is very good at making sure that I return calls or that emails are answered but when we moved into the... trying to form a new party, you know, the workload increased dramatically and indeed the nature of the work that people were being asked to do changed and, you know, that was... it was an interesting period.

G.

**COMMISSIONER:** It has been suggested to me by another witness that perhaps her skills set weren't ideally suited to the new work that you had to take on?

H.

**McCREA:** Well, Karen has great strengths, I mean, she is very good at people. But we were trying to move... because my diaries were so busy, which she had normally managed, but my diary became very busy and she was trying to do things on an



A. electronic basis and frankly, there were some problems with the software and there was... you know, it wouldn't have been Karen's natural forte, put it that way.

**COMMISSIONER:** And did these difficulties with the diary cause some friction between you?

B. **McCREA:** Well, my diary is chaotic and it does change rapidly, which is problematic, but the problem is sometimes that, you know, you are asked to go for an interview with a broadcaster or you are due to meet a community group and if you don't turn up, no matter what the reason is, it's very bad and people talking. So that did happen on a number of occasions for a variety of reasons but certainly it put me under stress whenever that happened.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, I think as you will know from reading Mr McCallister's complaint, it's alleged that in early April of 2013 there was a meeting in your office at Stormont and I think it was principally concerned with arrangements for the forthcoming NI21... well, NI21 hadn't been formed, but the forthcoming event at La Mon Hotel and it's alleged that at that meeting you shouted at Karen causing her distress?

D. **McCREA:** There would certainly have been... and occasionally I have said to you in the past, Commissioner, that there was an element of shouting out of frustration which, of course, I regret.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** And I think following that meeting she was off work for about three weeks due to stress?

F. **McCREA:** Yes, Karen... I mean, it wasn't a prolonged, you know, interaction, but it was in a crowded room, you know. One of the other problems we had is we had an awful lot of people working out of a very small room and, yes, Karen did feel badly about it and did take time off, you know, and... but for work-related stress.

G. **COMMISSIONER:** And then I think she continued to work for you from then, which must have been May, sometime in May, through to just before Christmas when she was [REDACTED]?

H. **McCREA:** Yes, that's correct.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** And that was unconnected with her work?
- McCREA:** Absolutely, yes.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** And was she off work again [REDACTED] until mid-February of 2014?
- McCREA:** That would be correct.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** And did you meet with her shortly after her return to work in February 2014?
- McCREA:** Yes, I tried to keep in touch with her even during the time that she was off. You know, just the odd phone call, just to make sure she was okay and obviously when she came back we had a long discussion about what was the best way to make use of her talents.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** And did she tell you of how... what had happened at the meeting in April, how it affected her?
- E. **McCREA:** Yes, I mean, we did obviously talk about it and, you know, I explained... these things sometimes get misunderstood about when you are trying to do something useful, it can be misinterpreted. But we sat and talked about how we would like to go forward and we had a frank but friendly conversation and we agreed on a way forward.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** And did you apologise to her for what had happened at the meeting in April?
- McCREA:** Absolutely. I mean, I think I might have apologised even beforehand. I mean, you know, it's... we live and work in a stressful, high-pressure environment but nevertheless it's not appropriate, you know, to have shouted and I apologised to her.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** And did she regret the error she had made with your diary?
- McCREA:** I think there was a mutual understanding of, if you will forgive me, I think even there was a... there was certainly a warm reconciliation at the meeting and we have
- H.

A. worked together ever since and that was... we went through the proper procedures and, you know, resolved the issue.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, I think you have mentioned that there had been other occasions when there had been difficulties over the diary and am I right in thinking that on some of these you shouted at her as well?

C. **McCREA:** Well, it might be more to being curt rather than shouting. You know, I mean, you do have to understand the frustration that you can be about to go on air, you know, on a radio programme and not have information to hand which should have been to hand, so it is a stressful environment and the environment had become more stressful because of the changes. So there was certainly trying to deliver something with very limited resources and in that environment there may well have been sharp words occasionally.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** But am I correct in understanding that anything that some regard as untowards that did take place took place in a short period from roughly February to mid-April of 2013?

E. **McCREA:** Well, that would be the time whenever we under maximum stress and in an attempt to reconfigure what we were doing, plus more people coming in and wanting to join, so that's the time when the stress levels would have been highest, both for Karen and myself. And do you know, I mean, like I don't resile from the fact that there was an issue which we had to resolve but we have resolved and to our mutual satisfaction as mature people.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, lastly in relation to Mr McCallister's complaint, he alleges that by your conduct, particularly at that meeting in April 2013, you broke the Respect principle of the code. What do you say to that?

G. **McCREA:** Well, I don't actually think that that was the case. I mean, certainly at no time have I shown Karen any lack of respect. I think, you know, she would be the first to say that actually I helped her considerably in a whole range of issues. There was certainly no disrespect to her. There was frustration on my part that I was in danger of being embarrassed publicly, which is a problem, but there was certainly no disrespect.

H.

A. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, coming to the only reference to your conduct towards Karen made in Ashleigh Murray's complaint document, she alleges that you asked her whether she should fire Karen. Is that correct?

**McCREA:** That wouldn't be correct.

B. **COMMISSIONER:** Is there anything, Mr McCrea, that you wish to add or change to what you have told me?

**McCREA:** No, I think that's satisfactory.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Do you have any complaint to make about this interview?

**McCREA:** No, I am happy indeed with the way the interview has been conducted.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** The time is now 14.23 and we will terminate this interview.

**McCREA:** Okay.

[Ends]

E.

F.

G.

H.



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Kathy Wilson

**Date:** 18 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED], Notetaker  
Kathy Wilson

**Time Started:** 11.29 pm

**Time Ended:** 11.45 pm

**A.**     **DB:** OK, you see this is being interview — this interview is being recorded. This is the interview of Kathy Wilson in connection with complaints against Basil McCrea MLA. Present are Douglas Bain, Commissioner for Standards, [REDACTED], note-taker. And you just say your name —

**KW:** Kathy Wilson.

**DB:** It just helps the transcriber to identify who's who. The interview is taking place in room 283 in Parliament Buildings and the time is now 11.29. I thank you for coming. As I think I indicated in the notice, in this investigation, I'm taking all the evidence on oath. Are you content to take an oath on the Bible —

**B.**     **KW:** Yeah.

**DB:** Or do you prefer to make an affirmation?

**KW:** No, on the Bible is fine.

**DB:** Will you take the book in your right hand and read the words of the oath?

**KW:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence that I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**C.**     **DB:** Thank you very much. Now can you just confirm that you have received from me a note outlining the procedure —

**KW:** I did.

**DB:** And drawing attention to various offences?

**KW:** Yes.

**DB:** And do you have any questions about that?

**KW:** No.

A. DB: OK. Thank you. Excuse me, I [*Inaudible.*] to see what I've written. Now, just to set the background, I think you work for John McCallister and you've done so since 2007.

KW: No, it would be, I started with John in 2011, so it would be, yeah, 2011, I started with John, not 2007.

DB: OK.

KW: I'm only there, yeah. That's when John was first elected in 2007. I wasn't there.

B. DB: All right, I've got a note of 2007 from somewhere else.

KW: You're OK.

DB: That's wrong. OK. And where did work? Where was your place of work?

KW: I work in John's constituency office in Newcastle. I've always been there. I'm very rarely in Stormont here. just once in a blue moon.

DB: And I am principally concerned today about certain information you may have about Basil's conduct towards Karen.

C. KW: Yeah.

DB: Just could you help me — how does Karen pronounce her second name?

KW: Tabahe.

DB: Tabahe. And am I right in thinking that you became much, had much more contact with her after both of them left the UUP?

KW: That's accurate, yes.

DB: And, essentially, were you doing the same jobs but for different MLAs?



A. **KW:** Yes, similar, yes, because we were both in charge of the MLAs' diaries, and because there was only the two of them, we had to try to coordinate as much between us as possible, so she was based in Stormont at that stage, I was in Newcastle, so we spoke daily on the phone probably.

**DB:** And would it be fair to say that the period between them leaving the UUP until after the party — NI21 — had been formed was a fairly fraught period, with everyone very busy and stressed?

**KW:** Yes, it would have been.

B. **DB:** Now I understand that Karen shared certain information with you about her relationship with Basil. I am not actually going to ask you about that —

**KW:** OK.

**DB:** — because that's, you know, she's the person to give evidence about that if she wishes to.

**KW:** Exactly.

**DB:** But did you ever see or hear yourself anything that you thought was improper or unusual taking place between Basil and Karen.

C. **KW:** No. It was just what she relayed to me. So, no, I didn't.

**DB:** And without going into details, essentially what she was complaining was that she was being bullied.

**KW:** Yes.

**DB:** Whether that's true or not, we don't know.

**KW:** No, I can just assume from the way she spoke to me and how her demeanour was.

**DB:** Yeah, but there could be any number of other reasons for it.

**A. KW:** Could've been.

**DB:** Personal reasons or whatever.

**KW:** But — Could've been, yeah.

**DB:** Was there — you were aware of what Karen was saying about Basil McCrea. Was John aware of it, to your knowledge? John McCallister.

**KW:** He was aware of it. There was one particular incident. Again, I wasn't there, my colleague, the office manager in our office, Annette Holden, who you'll probably speak to today as well.

**B.** There was one particular day when I was in Newcastle — I couldn't tell you a date or anything — and Annette had phoned and said there's been a horrible incident today where Basil basically shouted at her in front of people and she's in tears. She's stormed off. We've had to go and sort of comfort her. John knew that incident cos he had to speak to Basil about it. You know, and it was talked about in the office. you know, a couple of days later. I had asked how Karen was and I remember John distinctly saying that he had, so it was my understanding that he had spoken to Basil about that incident. But, yes, he would've known that Karen was feeling the pressure, so he did, yeah.

**C. DB:** And just to try and get this into the calendar, was that incident you've just told me about in the lead up to a sort of brainstorming event at La Mon?

**KW:** Yes. That was around the Easter, so if you think then they both, John resigned, I think it was Valentine's Day, February, so between that and Easter.

**DB:** Yeah, so some time —

**KW:** That was a turbulent period where, you know, things were, yeah.

**DB:** And it wouldn't be that unusual, given everything that was happening, for people to lose their temper from time to time.

**A. KW:** Not unusual, but it was unusual for Karen because she was such a happy-go-lucky type of person. You know, if you get to meet her, you'll see that yourself.

**DB:** Yeah.

**KW:** It was just quite a shock to see someone go from that confident person to someone who, when she phoned, she was constantly in tears and worried and felt harassed.

**DB:** And then I think there was a time when she was off work.

**B. KW:** Yes, I think that was after the Easter, there was a period of sickness then that came. So that was the period leading up to that event in La Mon that she had been set the task to organise that but she was getting increasingly stressed out about it because what she was telling me on the phone was that she couldn't do anything right; everything she done, Basil was criticising her for.

**DB:** Just to be clear, that was an NI — although NI21 hadn't been formed, it was an event about NI21.

**KW:** Yes, it was a brainstorming, as you said, yes.

**DB:** I mean, it wasn't anything to do with Mr McCrea's duties as an MLA.

**C. KW:** No, it was the party building up this new identity then, yeah.

**DB:** And it was shortly after that that NI21 —

**KW:** Was formed.

**DB:** Was formed.

**KW:** Yes, because the launch event was held in June, so —

**DB:** And I suppose then was that event kept quite secret.

**A.** **KW:** Yes. It was difficult in that Basil's office sort of took over. Basil took over the organising of it. John's side was kept out. We knew very little, you know, considering, you know, we were two full-time staff, Annette and myself, in the office. We just turned up to the launch. We had nothing to do, which was weird, you know, when you're organising a major event, a showcasing event. We were kept out of the loop really with that one.

**DB:** So was it always very clear from the start that Basil was going to be the leader and John was going to be the deputy?

**B.** **KW:** Yes. That was always clear.

**DB:** And then, I think, once she came back from sick leave, Karen didn't return to her work here, or if she did, she didn't stay actually here for very long.

**KW:** No, because she was moved then to the Dromore constituency office. She was deeply unhappy about that. I remember her saying that she didn't want to go there. She felt she was being pushed out. Really from after the La Mon incident, round, you know, that time, she felt she was increasingly being pushed out.

**DB:** Did the La Mon event go well?

**KW:** To be honest, I can't remember because I wasn't involved in it. I think it did.

**C.** **DB:** Yeah.

**KW:** Yeah. There's nothing jumping out of my mind that it didn't.

**DB:** OK. So it wasn't that it had been a disaster and that's why Karen was moved?

**KW:** No, I think everything worked out in the end, yeah.

**DB:** OK. And did you have much less contact with her after she moved?

**A.** **KW:** Yes, because she wasn't in charge of Basil's diary anymore and really we had nothing to confer with. But, when she was in charge of Basil's diary, you know, immediately after the split, she could've phoned me up to 10 times a day, checking one diary entry, and I would say but, Karen, you phoned 10 minutes ago; it's Thursday, 10 o'clock, Long Gallery. And she was so stressed that she was going to get it wrong, and she would say, I know, but he's put me under so much pressure, I'm going to get this wrong, and if I get this wrong, I'm going to get shouted at. Whether she had maybe put something wrong in before, I don't know, she didn't say. But this went on right up until the period of the sickness, and it was just, every time the phone rang, here we go again, you know, Karen, you're fine.

**B.** I just spent my days reassuring her that this diary entry was fine, who was coming, and then she phoned back later on, just before she left work then, is it definitely at 10 o'clock, you know. So that's how I knew something just wasn't right with her because she never would've done this before, you know. Like, myself and my colleague in the office would've looked at each other and said it's Karen again. Why's she phoning again?

**DB:** I understand that. Did you ever discuss Karen with John McCallister?

**KW:** Not in any great detail.

**C.** **DB:** That she was complaining about Basil.

**KW:** Yes, I probably did mention it, yeah. The way I work in the constituency office, John would only be in on a Friday. He's here Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. I don't work Thursdays for John. So, on a Friday, would've been the only chance we had to speak about it, but, yes, cos I think he was actually there a couple of the days when she kept phoning, you know, this is Karen again, you know, and he is right OK.

**DB:** And that, again, would be largely before Karen moved to Dromore.

**KW:** Yes.

- A. DB:** So, if, as you probably know, John has made a complaint against Basil. Is there any reason why he couldn't have made that complaint at any time from April or May of 2013 onwards?

**KW:** About Karen?

**DB:** No, about Basil. Because he was aware of all the information that he had about conduct towards Karen.

**KW:** Well, no, there's no reason. It's just, you know, as far as I'm aware, he did speak to him about his behaviour, you know. I think Basil spoke to Karen after it, you know, but a lot of these things came out, obviously, you know, after.

- B. DB:** And, indeed, the Carecall process, which never reached a conclusion, that wasn't started until long after the event at La Mon.

**KW:** Yes.

**DB:** Now, what part — You worked in the same office as Annette Holden, is that right?

**KW:** Yes, that's correct.

**DB:** Who actually drafted the complaint that's in John McCallister's name? John or Annette?

- C. KW:** Annette drafted it on behalf of John. That's my understanding. Which wouldn't be unusual for Annette to do all of John's paperwork, cos she does. She would do, you know, a lot of letter writing, as you can imagine, you know. John, he's great on the Assembly floor but he's not an IT genius by any stretch of the imagination. But, yes, there's no secret like.

**DB:** And Annette is a legally qualified —

**KW:** Yes, she has acted from I came on board, she was always his legal adviser. You know, she represents him at a lot of things, you know, in his name, through a legal capacity — planning appeals, blah-di-blah-blah.

**A.** **DB:** OK, that's — Now, I know that probably doesn't sound like very much but it's actually been incredibly helpful.

**KW:** All right, OK, cos I was thinking, I don't, as I said to Carecall, I don't know what to this investigation I can help. It was only the Karen stuff. As you say, a lot of it, I never seen anything myself. It was just what has been relayed to me, so —

**DB:** Thank you. I'm sorry to have to ask you to come in, but that has been very helpful.

**KW:** No, if it has helped.

**B.** **DB:** Are there any questions that you want to ask me?

**KW:** No. Just what is the timeline for an investigation of this scale?

**DB:** Well, what a good question.

**KW:** How long is a ball of string?

**DB:** There are a significant number of witnesses that I still have to see, and some of them, we are having difficulty making contact with because they have left the addresses they were at. So that's going to alter things. I would be surprised if I finished interviewing witnesses much before Christmas.

**C.** Then what has to happen is that I decide the facts that I've found proved, and they have to be sent to Mr McCrea, and he gets the opportunity to comment on them, and then I have to draft my report and submit it to the Committee, and, after that, it is out of my hands. As you know, the Committee often only meets once a month, so that's a further delay, so you know, into next year before we get anywhere, I'm afraid, but that is just the nature of these things.

**KW:** I totally understand that.

**A.**     **DB:** I should have said, what we do now is, this will be transcribed, and we'll send you a copy of the transcript, and you get an opportunity to correct anything in the transcript. If I accept your correction, then the transcript is just amended. If I don't accept your amendment, then your request for me to amend it is attached to your statement, and then your statement, the transcript, actually goes with my report to the Committee and, in due course, will be published.

**KW:** OK.

**DB:** OK?

**KW:** Yes, that's fine.

**DB:** Thank you very much for your time.





## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:****Basil McCrea****Witness:****Neil McNickle****Date:****29<sup>th</sup> September 2015****Place:****Room 283, Parliament Buildings****Present:****Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner****[REDACTED], Notetaker****Neil McNickle****Time Started:****10.00 am****Time Ended:****10.14 am**

A. **COMMISSIONER:** Good morning, Mr McNickle, and thank you for coming. This is the interview of Mr Neil McNickle taking place in Room 283 in Parliament Buildings on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The time is now 10.00am. Present are Mr McNickle, Mr Bain, the Commissioner, and [REDACTED] taking a note of the meeting which is being recorded. There are a few formalities, Mr McNickle, before we start. Because  
B. of the nature of this investigation I am taking all the evidence on oath. Would you prefer to take the oath on the Bible or to make an affirmation?

**McNICKLE:** The Bible.

C. **COMMISSIONER:** Would you take the book then in your right hand and read the words on the card, please.

**McNICKLE:** I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

D. **COMMISSIONER:** Thank you very much. And just a couple of further formalities. Can you confirm that you received a letter from me setting out the purpose of this interview?

**McNICKLE:** Well, I received an email with a letter attachment.

E. **COMMISSIONER:** Right, and that set out what the purpose of this was?

**McNICKLE:** Yes.

F. **COMMISSIONER:** Namely looking at the email you had sent?

**McNICKLE:** Indeed, yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And with that was there a note outlining the procedures?

G. **McNICKLE:** There was, yes.

**COMMISSIONER:** And do you have any questions about these?

**McNICKLE:** No.

H.

- A. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. Now, as you I think know, I am investigating a number of complaints against Basil McCrea, one of a number of which are made by Ashleigh Murray and it's in connection with these that I interview you today.
- McNICKLE:** Right.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** Could I ask you to look at a document marked "JMcC14", which appears to be an email that you sent to Mr McCallister in May 2014?
- McNICKLE:** It is, yes.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Yes. Did you send that email?
- McNICKLE:** I did.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** What prompted you to send it?
- McNICKLE:** Well, I had only... at the time there was quite a bit of press reporting regarding the matters obviously relating to Mr McCrea and Ms Murray. It's something... it related to a matter that had played on my mind for some time, although I didn't think anything really more of it at the time because I didn't know of any background. It was only through the press reporting that I became aware of the sort of background and was able to join the dots, if you like.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And had anyone contacted you, in particular Annette Holden or John McCallister, before you sent it?
- F. **McNICKLE:** No.
- COMMISSIONER:** So it was spontaneous after having seen what was in the press?
- G. **McNICKLE:** Well, I was aware that there was... I was still a member of the party at the time, I was aware that there was a Carecall investigation. I thought I may have something, I could add something to that investigation, or possibly add something to that investigation.
- H. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. And how did Mr McCallister respond to your email?

A.

**McNICKLE:** Erm... I believe he telephoned me and just asked me was I happy enough to... for it to be passed along, I believe, you know, to Carecall.

**COMMISSIONER:** Okay.

B.

**McNICKLE:** That's to the best of my recollection now, as it's a year-and-a-half ago, you know.

**COMMISSIONER:** I appreciate that. And were you agreeable to it being passed on?

C.

**McNICKLE:** I was, yes. That was the purpose of me sending the email so I had no objection to that.

D.

**COMMISSIONER:** In the email you report Mr McCrea as asking you to have a drive past [REDACTED] at about nine o'clock in the morning to check if Ashleigh Murray was at the bus stop or not.

**McNICKLE:** Yes.

E.

**COMMISSIONER:** Would you normally have been in the [REDACTED] area at about nine o'clock in the morning?

**McNICKLE:** No, no.

F.

**COMMISSIONER:** So it seems quite an unusual request?

**McNICKLE:** It does.

**COMMISSIONER:** In any event, you didn't accede to the request?

G.

**McNICKLE:** No, I felt it was highly inappropriate, to be quite honest.

**COMMISSIONER:** If it is the case that Ms Murray was having difficulty with her timekeeping and was saying to Mr McCrea that it was trouble with the buses, what was inappropriate about seeing if she was at the bus stop or not?

H.

- A. **McNICKLE:** Well, to be quite honest, I didn't work for Mr McCrea and even if I had, to spy on a member of staff like that would be highly inappropriate.
- COMMISSIONER:** Why?
- B. **McNICKLE:** Well, it's an invasion of privacy for a start, you know. Obviously, I am not aware of the guidelines for how MLAs handle their staff and their timekeeping issues but from my experience working in the private sector it would be highly irregular to behave like this.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Very well. And did you contact Mr McCrea at the time that you decided to send this?
- McNICKLE:** No. I have had no contact with Mr McCrea since roughly May of last year.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, I appreciate these questions are going to sound incredibly detailed but this is actually quite important. If you look at the email, there is certain bits of it are in quotations.
- McNICKLE:** Yes.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** Do you recall if... I mean, was that precisely what Mr McCrea said?
- McNICKLE:** Yes.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** So you were recollecting here in May 2014 something that had happened I think you say in September time roughly?
- McNICKLE:** Yes.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** But you would have precise recollection of his words at that time later?
- McNICKLE:** Yes. Well, what made the conversation stick in my mind so much was that the fact that it was such an unusual conversation. You know, I would have had plenty of conversations with Basil McCrea that I wouldn't have remembered. The fact that this was such a strange conversation is what made it stick in my mind.
- H.

Transcript – Neil McNickle, 29 September 2015

Page 5 was redacted by the Committee.

- A. **McNICKLE:** The exact words were, I believe I quoted it, that she had psychological issues. I may have... there may be a typo in that email.
- COMMISSIONER:** Right. Because I am not sure quite what sociological issues would be.
- B. **McNICKLE:** No, no.
- COMMISSIONER:** Did he give any details as to these psychological issues?
- McNICKLE:** No, and I didn't ask him.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** If he said "psychological issues" why isn't that part of the email in quotes?
- McNICKLE:** I don't know, it's perhaps a mistake in my grammar.
- D. **COMMISSIONER:** Would it be fair to say that you were strongly opposed to the actions taken by Mr McCrea in not designating NI21 and removing the designation?
- McNICKLE:** That would be fair to say, yes.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And indeed, you were very supportive of Mr McCallister's line?
- McNICKLE:** I don't know if you could really say that either.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** Well, eh...
- McNICKLE:** I was supportive to a point. I felt that Mr McCallister let the party down very badly as well, to be quite honest.
- G. **COMMISSIONER:** Can I ask you to look at document "DB36" and included in that an email where a tweet it appears you made on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2014, that's the day before you sent the email we have been discussing, and you see it says, "If we are to have any chance of saving NI21 the members need to rally behind John McCallister."
- H. **McNICKLE:** I think that was a case of it was the lesser of two evils, to be quite honest.



- A. **COMMISSIONER:** And then on 28<sup>th</sup> May in the same document "DB36", you are quoted in an article you apparently contributed to for the Newsletter.
- McNICKLE:** I don't see any mention of Mr McCallister there.
- B. **COMMISSIONER:** You are quoted as being critical of the way Mr McCrea was running the party.
- McNICKLE:** Oh absolutely, yes, but that's not to be taken as support for Mr McCallister. That's said, as I have already stated, you know, in my view Mr McCallister was the lesser of two evils. Perhaps we are arguing about semantics here.
- C. **COMMISSIONER:** Okay. But if you were calling in that article on 28<sup>th</sup> May for Mr McCrea to step aside, then presumably Mr McCallister as the deputy would become the leader of the party?
- D. **McNICKLE:** Well, I'm not expert in the NI21 constitution but I would understand if Mr McCrea was to step aside there would have to be a leadership challenge. It was more in my view about Mr McCrea standing aside as he had let so many candidates down who invested their own time and money in the whole procedure of standing as candidates than supporting Mr McCallister.
- E. **COMMISSIONER:** And in your view how had Mr McCrea let them down?
- McNICKLE:** Well, obviously with the redesignation. On election day he abandoned his candidates, he didn't appear before the cameras, didn't appear at any of the count centres. I was one of the candidates, we supported each other without a leader.
- F. **COMMISSIONER:** Now, thank you. That's everything I have to ask you. Is there anything you have said to me that you wish to reconsider or revise?
- G. **McNICKLE:** No.
- COMMISSIONER:** Is there anything else you wish to say that you think might help me in connection with my investigation?
- H. **McNICKLE:** Not that I know of, no.

A.

**COMMISSIONER:** No. And do you have any complaints to make about the way I have conducted the interview?

**McNICKLE:** No, not at all.

B.

**COMMISSIONER:** Okay. Thank you very much. The time is now 10.14 and I will conclude this interview.

[Ends]

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

H.



Statement to be delivered to DB 52  
Douglas Baine.

I [REDACTED] of my own  
accord feel it necessary to  
include my statement concerning  
Basil McCrea in this matter.

With the allegations being brought  
against him, I feel it only just  
that I enter my own experiences  
with himself.

As I had been contacted previously  
a number of times, included in  
my evidence overleaf, by the  
way a statement could be  
made for Ashleigh Murray,  
as a witness to alleged behaviour  
of Basil McCrea.

This I refused to do, and informed  
her I did not want my name  
brought into matters, as I felt  
my circumstances were more  
important.

I met Basil McCrea and Ashleigh  
Murray on a tour of Stormont  
alongside the Prince's Trust  
as a Young Ambassador, and having  
a keen interest in politics decided  
to keep in contact with Ashleigh  
whom I thought was Basil's PA.



As they were in the process of beginning to create a new political party for Northern Ireland I decided to volunteer with Basil in his office, and quickly became aware that although had been implied, Ashleigh was in fact a volunteer and not a paid member of his staff.

One instance I can recall were Ashleigh Murray, was in an emotional state was after Basil raised his voice over the babble in the office to ask Ashleigh whether she had completed a task she had been set. On reflection I believe the emotional state she got into was not over Mr McCrea "shouting at her", I believe it was down to lack of experience in a work environment and lack of maturity on her behalf.

Whilst on a break outside I reminded her she was a volunteer and did not need to be there if she was unhappy, the hours she worked were of her own free will, and Basil never expected more of us



than what he thought we were capable, and never asked us to put ourselves under any pressure. Although with the launch of a new party underway he was more than appreciative and wanted to take advantage of the talents we could bring and utilize.

That was one thing that Basil McCrea was excellent for was giving everyone a chance regardless of circumstance or background. Another point Ashleigh had mentioned to myself was of Basil questioning our backgrounds. I certainly had a conversation with him self surrounding backgrounds and if it would affect anything I was planning to do from a political sense, as we would all be in the spotlight and he wanted to protect us from situations we may have been incapable of dealing with ourselves.

Whilst in Basil's company he acted completely professionally at all times, and there were more than a few occasions





that I was alone in his company and he never made me feel uncomfortable, and never portrayed himself inappropriately

I can attest to the fact that on occasion Basil did have to raise his voice, to the team of staff, to be heard and get his points across, but it was nothing I would deem abnormal in the work place, and we must remember it was a high pressure environment where a lot needed to be done under deadlines. If you felt it was too much or you were ill equipped to deal with the situation, we were aware we were there in a voluntary capacity and could leave at any time.

Due to my own personal circumstance I left before the party officially launched, it was almost 10 months later that I had seen Ashleigh on television and I had rung her to check on her wellbeing, she somewhat explained her gripe with Basil, and I made it clear that I did not want to be a part of Carecall Inquiry.



Messages from Ashleigh to myself and a brief conversation between myself and John McCallister are attached with this statement.

I had not contacted Basil when the allegations were initially brought forward as I believed it would be unsubstantiated and dealt with pretty quickly, but by 3rd Nov 2014 when I realised that it was going to the Standards and Privileges Commissioner Douglas Baine, and decided to contact Basil and put in a statement in his defense as I believe the way he has been treated has been unjustified and unfair.

If you need any further information from myself please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Please keep my contact details confidential.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

05/11/14



<p>Ashleigh Murray</p> <p>24 MAY AT 13:19</p> <p>You called Ashleigh</p> <p>Sorry battery low thats y i got cut off my number [REDACTED] xx</p> <p>13 JUN AT 22:52</p> <p>Hey [REDACTED]</p> <p>As you may know the carecall process has been scuppered but we haven't given up hope that justice will be served and the punishment will fit the crime.</p> <p>I will be rewriting my statement given to carecall to produce to the standards and privilege</p>	<p>commissioner, Douglas Baine, this is due to carecall not following their duty of care to not just myself but to you too and the interference of certain individuals</p> <p>I was hoping that you would rewrite your statement or if you haven't written one would you be able to do so? These statements are to contain the truth of what you have experienced, witnessed or unfortunately been subject too. These will range across many different aspects but the more detailed the better.</p> <p>These statements are not to be based round me but to be based on facts about yourself or in the case you have witnessed anything involving me then please document this in the statement.</p> <p>I plan to get all statements together, I will not read any of them, and personally take them to Douglas Baine to receive a receipt.</p> <p>You can write these statements confidentially or disclosing your identity, whatever you feel more comfortable with.</p>
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Now is the time for us to stand strong, speak up and act like the team we were put together to be. This may not be the fight we wanted to fight but this is the one we have been given.

Feel free to contact me at any stage with any questions.



Thanks



Or feel free to post it to him, I will have the details at the start of next week 😊

Hey 😊

How's you?? Was wondering if you would do me a massive favour



😊!?!? Xx

Whats up xx

Hey 😊 Thanks for getting back to me 😊 [REDACTED] and stuff at the moment and I wouldn't ask if I didn't really need you help! I'm taking my complaints and statements to the standards commissioner, I have looked in to what is needed etc and was wondering you could write up a paragraph or two about the treatment you received/witnessed especially concerning myself with the whole 'damaged background', with him shouting at me while I was crying etc and anything you felt was inappropriate??

Again I wouldn't ask but I need help showing what sort of character he is xxx



John McCallister  
MESSENGER

INVITE

23 MAY AT 10:05

Hey John just wanted to send you my support at this tough time if you need anything let me know 😊



26 MAY AT 22:05



Thanks [REDACTED] Hope you're ok too.

Yeah John keeping well Ashleigh had suggested I talked to you about going to Carecall etc and making a statement with regards to all that is going on



And how do you feel about doing that. I can put you in touch with them if you would like that.

If it isn't required I would prefer not to as I am going for a [REDACTED] tomorrow, and I didn't witness any of the sexual allegations being put forward but can attest to the treatment of staff and general attitude on a daily basis, because they were reasons why I left so close to the launch and I will put in a statement if you would like me to do so.

The thing is I don't think Basil as a bad person, the way I seen it is that he was under alot of pressure at that time, and he maybe did say and do a few things that were inappropriate and disrespectful but I think overall I maybe had a thicker skin than most.

It might be helpful if you put in a statement and sign it and Fiona could pass on. [REDACTED]



Thank you prayers for health 😊 and ok is Fiona no longer working for Basil? I would rather do it through Carecall than pass my statement through the office.

Seen 28 May at 22:57





## NOTE OF INTERVIEW MRS [REDACTED]

I interviewed [REDACTED] by telephone on 8 October 2015. The interview started at 1400 and ended at 1422. At the start of the interview I outlined the procedure for the investigation and for the record of her interview. [REDACTED] elected to take the oath and was sworn.

She told me that –

- She preferred to do the interview by phone rather than attending for interview as she had a young child.
- The written statement she had sent me was true.
- No one had put pressure on her to send it.
- She had worked as a volunteer for Mr McCrea at Stormont from March 2013 until the eve of the NI21 launch in July 2013.
- Ashleigh Murray was already working as a volunteer when she started and continued after she left.
- She first met Ashleigh and Mr McCrea at an event at Stormont for the Prince's Trust.
- When she started at Stormont Ashleigh had given her the impression that she was a paid employee. It was only some weeks later that she learned from Karen and Fiona that Ashleigh was also a volunteer.
- Ashleigh used to pass on to her work that Mr McCrea had given her to do. She accepted such work because she believed that Ashleigh was a paid staff member.
- During the time they were working together Ashleigh never complained to her about Mr McCrea's conduct. Ashleigh did complain about the workload which she thought was excessive.
- Shortly after she started at Stormont she and Ashleigh had been tasked with sending invitations to all those on the NI21 membership list. In a period of about two hours she had completed many more invitations than Ashleigh. Mr McCrea had impressed on both of them the urgency and importance of the task. When doing so he had raised his voice so he could be heard over the noise made by the other people in the room. Ashleigh had rushed out of the room crying. She did not think that there was anything wrong with Mr McCrea's behaviour. She believed that Ashleigh was upset because she could not accept the need to get on with the task rather than by anything said or done by Mr McCrea. She had spoken to Ashleigh at

the time and reminded her that as a volunteer she was free to leave at any time.

- She had stopped working as a volunteer on the eve of the NI21 launch because she had come to realise that NI21 did not have the structures and policies in place she had hoped for. Mr McCrea was reluctant to take advice at the time due to the stress involved in setting up a new political party, his approach being that he was the leader and that therefore the decisions and direction of the party were up to him. She felt that even as a volunteer her voice should have been listened to and she should have been allowed some input.
- She never saw or heard any conduct by Mr McCrae which she regarded as improper or untoward. You just had to do what you were there to do.
- She had been alone with Mr McCrea on numerous occasions and he had never done anything in anyway improper. He had spoken warmly of his partner.
- From shortly after Ashleigh's allegations had appeared in the media she had been 'pestered' by her to make a statement about Mr McCrea's conduct. She had declined because she did not think that there was anything wrong with his conduct other than being unwilling to take advice.
- Ashieigh had tried to explain what her complaint was about but *'could not get her story straight'*.
- Mr McCallister had also asked her to make a statement but she had declined for the same reason.
- Just because NI21 hadn't worked out the way she wanted she did not see the need to make allegations against Mr McCrea. He was not her 'best friend' but she didn't like to see false allegations being made out of revenge.
- She thought Mr McCrea very naive: he wanted to help everyone but didn't realise what was going on and that some of those he was helping didn't want to help him
- She did not wish to add anything to what she had told me
- She did not have any complaint to make about how she had been interviewed and hoped that the matter would soon be brought to a conclusion.

*Appendix (KT)***Interview Record**

**Case reference number:** NI21 004 -05-14-CS  
**Name of Investigator:** [REDACTED]  
**Name of Note taker:** [REDACTED]  
**Person interviewed:** Karen Tabahe (KT)  
**Others present:** None  
**Venue:** Carecall, 80 University St, Belfast  
**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014  
**Objective of interview:** To investigate allegations of bullying and sexual harassment  
**Abbreviations:** Basil McCrea (BMcC), John McCallister (JMcC), Fiona McAteer (FMcA), Jamie Mackell (JM), Ashleigh Murray (AM), [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Alan Patterson (AP), Kirsty McCrea (KMcC)

**Record of interview:****1.0 Introductions and Process**

- 1.1 [REDACTED] introduced herself as the external, independent investigator from Carecall, the organisation appointed by NI21 to conduct an investigation into allegations of bullying and sexual harassment.
- 1.2 The investigation process was explained and agreed to as follows:
- [REDACTED]'s role was to act as an impartial investigator and to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.
  - The notes taken throughout the interview by [REDACTED] would be summarised at the end of the interview and signed by the interviewee as an accurate record of the interview. This would not be a verbatim record and would only include quotes where this was relevant.
  - Should the interviewee wish to make any amendments to the record these would then be discussed with [REDACTED] and if it was felt the changes did not alter significantly the investigator's understanding of the interview they would be incorporated into the record. The interviewee would then receive the amended record to sign off as an accurate record of the interview.
  - Where the Investigator does not agree with the suggested changes these will be appended to the Record and will form part of the Final Report.
  - [REDACTED] explained that copies of all signed interview notes would be attached as appendices to the Final Report, which will be submitted to John McCallister.
  - [REDACTED] stressed the confidential nature of the inquiry and explained that papers may have to be released in the event of a legal case arising from the complaint.

**2.0 Opening Comments**



- 2.1 KT has been treated inappropriately by BMcC. She has not been a witness to anything sexual.  
KT feels that she has been bullied.  
BMcC would say "I helped you", but this left KT feeling in debt to BMcC for personal circumstances.  
KT has been in paid employment on a part time basis since November 2009.  
KT got divorced in 2009, and was dealing with some personal issues.  
KT loved her job and remained loyal to BMcC. He was aware of this.

KT feels she has to open up and tell the truth

When FMcA came on board in 2011, she was courageous and made KT realise that it wasn't acceptable behaviour, had become fearful of his shouting.

### 3.0 Detail of Allegations

3.1 **Example:**

BMcC making comments about not doing job properly in front of others, shouting (FMcA & JM present). It got extreme when he lost whip of party in 2012 – discipline hearing. It became more difficult.

3.2 **Example:**

KT showed [REDACTED] journal entry dated 21/02/2013 where she had prayed for a 'great team' because work was so difficult and the atmosphere was so bad.

3.3 **Example:**

April 2013 – Party event of pre NI21

KT spent the weekend trying to sort out the venue, feeling scared due to a bad atmosphere in the office. AH had been told to organise by JMCC but KT had been told to organise the venue. KT knew it was crucial, she went to BMcC in member's dining room to advise JMCC was looking for him. Back at the office, KT heard the steps and could feel the bad temper coming, other staff were all sitting in the room (FMcA, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]), KT's desk was facing the wall, and she had to turn to see BMcC enter room. He was so aggressive, shouting at the top of his voice - "I told you ... (date of first meeting)"

JMCC was standing beside BMcC, he was shocked and full looked with disbelief. KT was feeling physically ill, and undermined.

BMcC walked out.

KT did her best to keep composed.

The next day, again BMcC was horrible and shouting at her. KT was so upset she couldn't stop crying in front of the others - FMcA, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

KT was feeling that she was having a nervous breakdown. Felt undervalued, not appreciated for job she was doing, and BMcC saw her as not a person of worth.

He left the office, KT went in [REDACTED] had adjoining door, his staff were all listening (not by choice). They knew KT, they were distressed for her, and for themselves. Others walking past the offices heard too.

KT went back in but realised she was in a bad state and put coat on and walked out (BMcC was not there)

KT went to the GP who put her off on work related stress.

KT had been trying to rebuild life, she was off work for three weeks, BMcC never once called.

FMcA had advised KT that he was livid that work related stress was listed on the sick line.





When KT was off work sick, JMcC called KT the next day, he apologised for the way that BMcC had spoken to her, said that it was really wrong. KT felt appreciated and valued by JMcC. KT kept that confidential.

**3.4 Example:**

AM started around that difficult time as the 'travelling PA'

KT felt it was inappropriate that BMcC was picking her up and leaving her home. KT advised BMcC that she thought it was inappropriate.

On a Friday, BMcC made a call on loudspeaker while AM was in the car. BMcC said "AM didn't have an easy life, it was important that she speaks to KT privately".

**3.5 Example:**

KT returned to work on 07/05/2013, was no longer sure of role any longer as AM travelling PA. BMcC promised a chat but didn't deal with this, KT found it difficult. BMcC never once asked how she was feeling.

KT was never included in the new party details, she was kept out.

AP was party secretary and he advised that he would meet and go through the roles.

AP advised KT that she was BMcC PA.

KT returned from holidays in August 2013. On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August, there was a team meeting. KH was feeling exhausted. DR had taken over as party Secretary. Before her holidays, he had asked to write down the roles they thought they had. Kirsty described KT's role, no one had told KT that her role was different and Kirsty had a contract. KT learned that Kirsty had got cards printed when she had been on holidays.

Later: BMcC brought KT to [REDACTED]'s room. "A word with you ... I don't care which one of you is my PA, you will be my PA and so will KMcC".

September: BMcC wanted a word with KT, they went to the canteen. BMcC asked KT to go out to Dalton's (the Lisburn office) where AM was, BMcC asked KT to keep an eye on AM.

When out there, AM opened up to KH. AM showed KH messages of a sexual nature between AM and BMcC. AM was making reference to Facebook account deleted on his part.

AM told KT about LaMon meeting: AM went to the car to bring item to BMcC's room. He asked her to massage shoulder. AM told KT because she was used and he was grooming her. And also because BMcC always told new people to speak to her if they had any issues. This was approx. September 2013

**3.6 Example:**

Dalton's is a restaurant in Lisburn, BMcC had a room upstairs. It was freezing. KT didn't last long, they were not proper working conditions. KT felt BMcC was trying to get rid of her. KT worked from home until December 2013

**3.7 Example:**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> December KT [REDACTED] and was off work until 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

While KT was off, she was contacted by several people from other departments she had been treated badly, that she had a case for constructive dismissal.

KT felt it was important to contact BMcC as she was feeling stronger. On her first day back to work (17<sup>th</sup> February), she confronted BMcC. Said she had been contacted by several (undisclosed) colleagues and she had complaint about constructive dismissal. KT gave notice.

KT believed this conversation was confidential, it transpired that it was not.

BMcC asked her to stay, said he had helped her, she felt she had to stay.





Agreed that KT work 16 hours, was meant to be based in Lisburn but was kept at Stormont, was not happy there as KMcC doesn't speak to her. No one visited office – not even other staff, it was not a good working environment. KT Found it difficult, felt belittled and that BMcC had taken advantage of her good nature.

Series of abuse has made KT feel no respect for BMcC and allowed her to share this. KT sorry that a man of this position has used it wrongly, he could have made a difference. He is picking on vulnerable people.

In April & May 2013, KT feels that she wasn't wanted back to work. BMcC never even called. Things get brushed under the carpet i.e. people leave.

- 3.8 KT is still at Stormont as apparently Lisburn is not working out. KT is adding contacts to a list, and nothing being done with the, KT is unsure of her role. Feeling badly treated and not engaged with.
- 3.9 KT doesn't really see BMcC that often, but he does know something is going on as this week he invited KT to attend end of year review and one to one meetings, he has never done this.

Note – Karen has requested copy of notes to be sent to her at  
[REDACTED]

#### 4.0 Closing Comments

- 4.1 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that they should not talk to anyone about the matter being investigated.
- 4.2 [REDACTED] reminded the interviewee that victimisation of any person involved in the making of, or investigation of, a complaint constitutes unlawful discrimination and if experienced should be reported immediately.
- 4.3 The Final Report will be submitted as soon as possible.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
[REDACTED]



**Bain, Douglas**

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 January 2015 15:06  
**To:** Bain, Douglas  
**Subject:** FW: DRAFT TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING HELD OON 2 DECEMBER 2014 FROM THE NI ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS

Douglas – Response from Jamie Mackrell below.

[REDACTED]

**From:** Jamie Mackrell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 13 January 2015 14:44  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: DRAFT TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING HELD OON 2 DECEMBER 2014 FROM THE NI ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS

Hi [REDACTED]

I had a read through the transcript there. There's one thing I can see needs corrected, at page 15, part C it says "Nikon Services", it should be "Icon services".

Douglas also asked about two other points, the holiday pay and driving. In relation to the holiday pay, I mentioned during our meeting that I wasn't sure whether an employer could legally restrict their employees' holiday entitlement. I checked this after we met and discovered that workers in Northern Ireland have a statutory right to 28 paid holiday days per year. I'm not sure why there is an option for Members not to grant holiday pay to their employees, given that this is the law. As far as I remember though, my last day working for Basil was on the 3rd May 2013, the day those letters were signed.

As for the driving and my constituency work, I spent a few months living in Lisburn and was able to undertake a lot of the work I was doing by foot or on my bike. The was indeed burdensome, so in November 2012 I took and passed my driving test. Soon after that I had a car and was able to lawfully carry out canvassing work by car. Basil knew this. There would have been around four or five months that I was able to work like this before leaving Basil.

To be clear, the reason I left Basil was because he was angry, abusive and overdemanding. I had the option to continue working under that stress, or to go on and better my education outside of Northern Ireland, so I chose to leave.

I hope this helps,

Jamie Mackrell

[REDACTED]



## STATEMENT OF [REDACTED]

I am employed by the Assembly Secretariat as a [REDACTED]

At the request of the Standards Commissioner I examined the records of the Secretariat in relation to the employment of Jamie Mackrell by Basil McCrea MLA.

As a result of that examination I can state that –

1. Mr Mackrell was employed by Mr McCrea as Member support from 1 June 2011 until 17 May 2013.
2. From 1 June 2011 until 1 July 2012 he was contracted to work 16 hours per week.
3. During that period his gross salary was £485.33 per month. That was also his net monthly salary. His gross hourly rate was £7.00.
4. From 2 July 2012 until the end of his employment on 17 May 2013 his contracted hours were increased from 16 to 40 per week.
5. With effect from 2 July 2012 Mr Mackrell's hourly rate was increased to £7.08. However notification of that change was received too late for the July pay run. As a consequence his net salary for August 2012 of £1,704.25 included arrears in respect of July.
6. During the period September 2012 until March 2013 his gross salary was £1227.20 per month and his net monthly salary was between £1045.62 and £1045.82. His gross hourly rate was £7.08. That rate continued until the end of his employment on 17 May 2013.
7. Mr Mackrell's gross salary for April 2013 was unchanged but his net salary increased to £1,069.66 due to a higher tax code.
8. Mr Mackrell's net salary for May 2013 was £692.54 due to the ending of his employment on 17 May.
9. All payments to Mr Mackrell in respect of his employment by Mr McCrea were made through the BACS system.

Sign: ... [REDACTED] .....

Date: ..... 6/2/14 .....



## Texts – 3 and 5 May 2013

This document was redacted by the Committee.



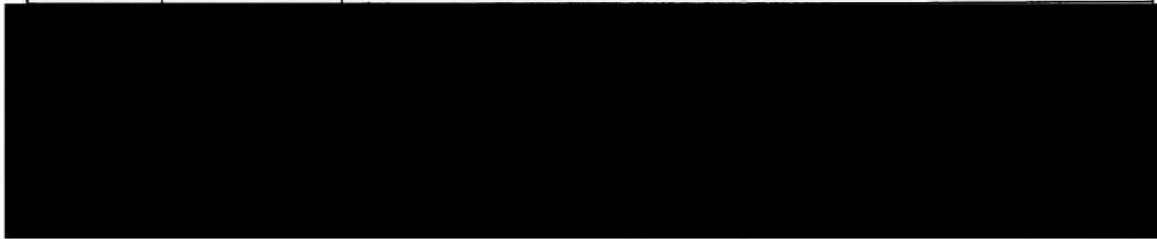
Texts – Murray/Neglia and Neglia/Rush 17 May 2013

This document was redacted by the Committee.

Texts – Neglia/Murray 27 May 2013

This document was redacted by the Committee.

2228	12:29:34	Showed them the solicitors letter and the Sunday life! O that's good then :) The massage lol
2227	12:29:46	Oh yeah!!
2226	12:30:00	I mentioned that
2225	12:30:45	Nothing else was referring to you unfortunately
2224	12:30:48	Yea i said to them too! I just want done with the whole thing
2223	12:30:51	I looked through the messages
2220	12:30:56	You got access to Facebook??
2221	12:30:56	Nothing there??
2222	12:30:56	No that's grand :) all you can do is tell the truth
2233	12:30:56	Or anyone else on our side??





NI21  
19 Market Square  
Dromore  
BT25 1AW

info@ni21.com



Your way of supporting NI21

+BRONZE  
+SILVER  
+GOLD



Hello.

NI21 is committed to building a future together for all in Northern Ireland, moving beyond sterile sectarianism to promote a modern, inclusive Northern Ireland identity for all. We are committed to opening up economic opportunity and social mobility for all by promoting a vibrant private sector, advancing our region's entrepreneurial talent and culture of enterprise, and supporting a modern public sector within a social market economy.

Our party will vigorously promote democratic reform of our political institutions to give authentic choice to citizens. We strongly support power-sharing and reject majority rule by any tradition. The creation of a democratic opposition is essential if Northern Ireland is to have accountable government, authentic choice and an alternative to sectarian politics. In addition we are committed to fairness, equality and social justice for all, irrespective of socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, disability, sexual orientation or political allegiance. Our shared responsibilities under the rule of law are fundamental to a shared and pluralist society.

## BRONZE

£50

Within this scheme you will receive:

- Pin Badge;
- NI21 Pen;
- T-Shirt;
- Weekly Updates
- Invite to Annual Drinks Reception

## SILVER

£200

Within this scheme you will receive all that is included in the Bronze level, plus:

- Invite to Policy Launch;
- Invite to Private Wine Reception;
- Group lunch with Basil McCrea MLA or John McCallister MLA.

## GOLD

£500

Within this scheme you will receive all that is included in the Bronze and Silver level, plus:

- Private one-to-one lunch with Basil McCrea MLA or John McCallister MLA;
- Advanced presentation of policy and manifesto documents.





I was on holiday in Sri Lanka when I heard from one of my members of staff that Mr Macauley had been employed by Mr McCallister MLA.			
Date	Time	McCrea/McCallister	Message
13.01.14		McCrea	Is Nigel Macauley working for us now?
13.01.14		McCallister	Yes. Met up with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] a couple of times last week and agreed we need to get on with it.
13.01.14 Email from [REDACTED] CC John McCallister & Peter Hutchinson		<p>This email contradicts Mr McCallister version.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>13 January 2014 12:40:51 GMT To: Basil McCrea Cc: John McCallister MLA, Peter Hutchinson Re: Nigel McCauley</p> <p>[REDACTED] John had some spend left in his local funds so he is utilising him.</p> <p>On 13 January 2014 12:30, Basil McCrea wrote: Is Nigel McCauley working for NI21 now?</p> <p>Basil McCrea MLA [REDACTED]</p>	
13.01.14		McCrea	In what capacity, for how long, at what rate?
13.01.14		McCallister	Working for party and closely with [REDACTED] to get local parties up and running raising money and candidates. Will also do some Comms stuff. Employed on £21.5k +2.5 pension. Cheaper to do that way. Length at least 1 year but preferable to end of mandate in May 2016.
13.01.14		McCrea	Where are you going to find the money?
13.01.14		McCrea	I will be back on Friday.
13.01.14		McCrea	I am uneasy about all of this.
13.01.14	14:48	McCallister	You have 10k I have 3k and fapp has 5k which is almost enough to pay sept oct. You shouldn't be uneasy as we all know we have a huge job getting things up and running and elections to fight in 4 months.
14.01.14	18:27	McCrea	Have you appointed Nigel Macauley director of communications?
14.01.14	19:33	McCallister	Unofficially yes but officially no. You would be better relaxing and enjoying holiday as all this will be here when you get home and stop getting the drip feeding.



Edit

Messages



Ashleigh

Details

McNickle Neil 09/03/2014

NM Take it you are happy to be on panel?

[REDACTED] 13/12/2013

I guess that's true. But it's not about blowing your own trump...

McClay Kirsty R... 03/09/2013

Ok let him sit in on meeting or get him a coffee I am on route

[REDACTED] 03/09/2013

I could bring you up

Clements Connor 03/09/2013

Can u take a call

Murray Ashleigh 02/09/2013

You'll be glad to know I bought one of those pens and have gi...

Stormont Office 02/09/2013

Ok I will run him down to it

Chalkley Suzanne 01/09/2013

Lol :)

[REDACTED] 31/08/2013

On route

[REDACTED] 31/08/2013

Where are you?

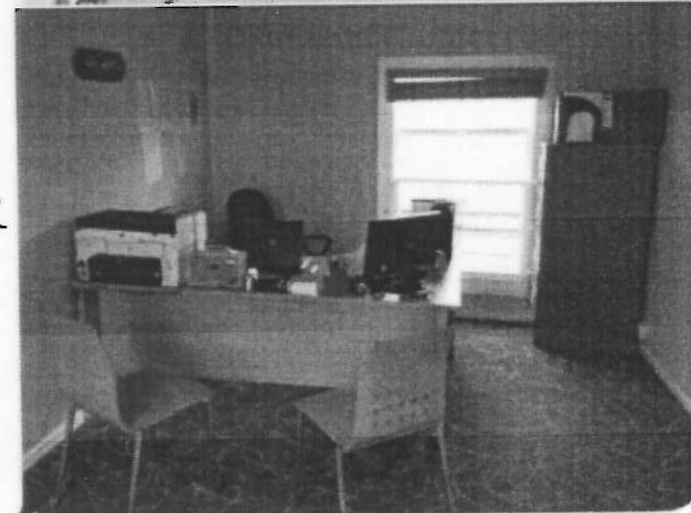
[REDACTED] 30/08/2013

Sure!

[REDACTED] 30/08/2013

Hope you are keeping well by the way.

[REDACTED] 29/08/2013



5 Aug 2013 19:03

I assume your not fussed on the office?

I am very fussed on the office lol

That's good then :)

6 Aug 2013 11:03

Morning, could we meet up at some stage this week to go through the signage and to get the iPad to start surveys

Of course. Upto my eyes with American



Message







1. Following a Princes Trust event in Stormont on 20.11.12, Ashleigh Murray contacted my office to ask for some work experience. Please see emails below.

Date	Time	Transit	Content
20.11.12	18:31	Received	Hi Basil, Thanks for such an informative session today and thank you for listening to our views and opinions! Basically I'm emailing you about coming to do some work experience in Stormont as we discussed today! I heard through the grapevine that your closing your Lisburn office and hoping to start up online, whether that's true or not I don't know but hey that's politics :)! I believe I could be a great attribute to your party as I have a good knowledge on housing issues, young mums, benefits, addiction and others. I believe I can help rally young people to be more involved and to make a better future for them! Thanks for taking the time to read this and I hope it appeals to you Ashleigh Murray
21.11.12	00:25	Sent	Hey it's true. When can you come and see me. Karen my pa will sort out a time that suits you
21.11.12	00:26	Received	You name a time and a place and I'll be there! Thanks again Basil, really appreciate it x
21.11.12	00:29	Sent	Where are you living at the moment. Is it convenient to get to Stormont?
21.11.12	00:32	Received	In [REDACTED]! Yea convenient enough
21.11.12	00:36	Sent	Ok Karen will pick this message up and set up a meeting. I am in Brussels next week so it will probably be the week after. :)
21.11.12	00:37	Received	Brilliant! Thank you! Enjoy your trip away :D
21.11.12	00:49	Sent	Great. Will see you later. Looking forward to it. Bye for now. Reading papers for tomorrow's committee meeting. Hope you realise how late politicians work lol
21.11.12	00:50		See you soon! That's fine by me, I'm a night owl anyways! Currently eating corn on the cob and watching question time lol! Take care, chat soon

## 2 Ashleigh Murray Employment History

2. My PA at the time Karen Tabahe then proceeded to arrange a suitable time for Miss Murray to come to my Stormont office. Please see emails below.

Date	Time	Transit	Content
30.01.13	14:52	Sent	Hi Ashleigh Are you still able to come to Stormont on Monday 4 February. Many thanks Karen. PS we have loads of work for you!!!
30.01.13	14:58	Received	Yea I'm still coming ☺ x
30.01.13	14:59	Sent	Brilliant!!! See you then. Thanks Karen
04.02.13	08:47	Received	Hi Karen! Sorry for the short notice but the builders have showed up this morning so unfortunately I can't leave! Would it be possible to arrange for tomorrow or Wednesday? Thanks
04.02.13	08:58	Sent	Hi Ashleigh No problems just send an email the best day suits you. You are going to have a lot of cleaning... Yuk!! Take care and thanks for letting us know. Karen
04.02.13	15:09	Received	Tell me about it, every time I clean it they show up again! Wednesday would probably be better ☺ Thanks
04.02.13	15:40	Sent	No problems. Karen
05.02.13	17:06	Sent	Hope to see you tomorrow 10:30am if this suits and weather permitting. Kind regards Karen
06.02.13	10:29	Received	On my way Karen, it held up with the dog sitter ☺! See you soon
06.02.13	10:30	Sent	Perfect. Karen
06.02.13	12:49	Received	Could you come and get me now?
11.02.13	14:26	Sent	Hi Ashleigh Are you still available to come to Stormont tomorrow around 11am or earlier. How long can you stay? Thanks Karen
11.02.13	14:27	Received	Yea that's no problem Karen! Probably until 3ish
12.02.13	09:14	Received	Morning Karen! You could quite possibly kill me! I just got a phone call and apparently I was meant to sign on yesterday so they've asked I come down today at 12:30! Would I be possible to come up tomorrow or Thursday? Sorry Thanks x
12.02.13	09:37	Sent	No problem. I will get [REDACTED] to ring you later. Thanks Karen
12.02.13	22:53	Sent	Hi Ashleigh Are you available to come up this Thursday at 10am to Stormont? Thanks Karen
12.02.13	23:54	Received	Yea in free on Thursday! Sorry about today! Thanks again, your so good ☺ x
13.02.13	10:00	Sent	Hi Ashleigh Can you please come up at 10am this Thursday? We can have a chat about some options that may be available to you. Kind regards
13.02.13	13:15	Received	Hi Karen, Yea ill be there tomorrow Thanks
15.02.13	16:13	Received	Hey Karen! Heard basil resigned from the uup, just wondering if I'm still needed next week? Thanks x
15.02.13	16:17	Sent	Hi Ashleigh, He just didn't want me to have a peaceful Friday! I would give Karen a txt, she doesn't work Fridays but since I'm off I'm sure she will need all the help she can get. I tried calling [REDACTED] about getting you signed up to the YES scheme but she is off so I'll ring next week. Thanks for sending those pics of the flash mob! Thanks Fiona

3. After spending some time in the office helping out other staff, Miss Murray was offered an internship on a voluntary basis. Please see email below.

Date	Time	Sent from	Sent to	Content
25.02.13	12:14	Fiona McAteer	Ashleigh Murray	Hi Ashleigh, Basil is in the position to offer you voluntary work experience and as discussed last week it would be helping [REDACTED] in the constituency. If you were to volunteer with us, we need a commitment that you will work the days you agree and if you can't make it that day to let us know. I know when you're on benefits you have to be ready to start work which means you can't volunteer full time. There is also half price travel you can get, the Jobs and benefits office have a card you fill in and get Translink to stamp. Let Basil know what you think. Many thanks Fiona McAteer

4. Miss Murray was interviewed and hired for a paid position in my office by [REDACTED] on 08.07.13. This was on a temporary 6 month contract in conjunction with People First, who facilitate the long term unemployed back into the workplace. Her hours of work were 10-5pm Monday- Friday. Please see emails below.

Date	Time	Sent from	Sent to	Content
08.07.13	11:22	Tina McKenzie	Basil McCrea	Morning Basil, Completed interview for the role of membership administrator for Lisburn/Stormont. Ashleigh has been successful and will start on 15 <sup>th</sup> July. Please find attached interview notes and KPIs to get started. Ashleigh will have a meeting with Aileen at First Choice re following up on an admin day release course. I will follow up with Alan Patterson re all of this. Regards, [REDACTED]

5. Miss Murray had a meeting with Alan Patterson to discuss work objectives on 22.07.13
6. On 04.09.13 Miss Murray posted on her facebook page "Good news 😊 Doing my QCF level 3 in business administration which is the equivalent to 2 A Levels 😊 Never thought I'd see the day! Big thanks to Basil McCrea MLA for giving me the opportunity 😊 xx"

7. Miss Murray had a meeting with [REDACTED] to review her attendance and punctuality on 18.09.13. Miss Murray's contract was amended to 10.30-5pm Monday- Friday. This was to facilitate her getting a more convenient bus to work.

Date	Sent from	Sent to	Content
28.10.13	Ashleigh Murray	Suzanne Chalkey	Hi Suzanne, As discussed earlier please find a run down of my daily expenses and bus timetables. On a daily basis I would get a taxi to work in the morning. I also get a taxi home. Taxis cost £10 each (£20 Daily) If I were to get the bus it costs £3.40 each way plus £3.70 (day ticket from [REDACTED]). This would cost just over £10 per day. Although this seems like the more sensible option I do not get home until nearly half 7 at night. Due to home commitments it does not benefit me to do this. A bus would pick me up in [REDACTED] at 9:30am and although the bus timetable says it arrives in Lisburn at 10:05am it does not arrive until 10:20 depending on traffic. If I were able to start work at 9am and work to 6pm Monday to Thursday it would save me £20 a week or £80 a month. This would be over my contracted hours. Thanks Ashleigh Murray

8. On 01.11.13 Ashleigh Murray resigned from her position as she was starting a new job the following Monday. Please see the following text messages, which confirm her resignation.

Date	Time	Transit	Content
01.11.13	17:21	Sent	I've spoken to Suzanne. Really sorry that you're going but I understand your rational. Pleased that you want to stay involved with the conference and the party. Just want to say thanks for all of your hard work. Basil :)
01.11.13	17:40	Received	It really broke my heart to leave! I love the party and everyone in it! I have told Kirsty I will help out on my days off etc! I will also train whoever you want in the office. If the financial situation changes let me know and I will be back in a heart beat! Thank you sooooo much for everything, you took a chance on me when I needed and Ill never forget it :) x
01.11.13		Sent	I am glad I did and I really hope things go well for you :)





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**STANDARDS &**

**21 JAN 2016**

**PRIVILEGES**

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

**Mr Keith McBride**  
**Clerk to the Standards & Privileges Committee**  
**Room 254**  
**Parliament Buildings**  
**Ballymiscaw**  
**Stormont**  
**Belfast**  
**BT4 3XX**

**21 January 2016**

Dear Keith

**COMPLAINTS AGAINST BASIL MCCREA MLA**

Please find attached two documents which were omitted in error from my report dated 18 October 2015. I apologise to the Committee for this error.

Document DB44A is a transcript of the interview of Fiona McAteer (Document DB44) showing, by way of tracked changes, her proposed revisions.

Document DB44B is my letter to her explaining why, with two exceptions, I was not prepared to accept these revisions.

As you will see those revisions which I did not accept were to improve the style of the transcript and did not in any respect affect its substance.

Yours sincerely

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**Encs**



## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Complaint Against:** Basil McCrea MLA

**Witness:** Fiona McAteer

**Date:** 18 November 2014

**Place:** Room 283, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Douglas Bain, Standards Commissioner  
[REDACTED] Notetaker  
Fiona McAteer

**Time Started:** 15.37 pm

**Time Ended:** 16.23 pm



**A.** **DB:** This is the interview with Fiona McAteer, taking place in room 283 Parliament Buildings on 18 November 2014. The time is 3.37 pm. Present are Douglas Bain, Commissioner for Standards; [REDACTED] note-taker; and Fiona McAteer.

**FM:** Fiona McAteer.

**DB:** Thank you. First of all, thank you for coming. As you'll see, this interview is being tape-recorded, and, as I indicated in the correspondence, I've decided, in this particular investigation, I'll take all the evidence on oath.

**B.** **FM:** OK.

**DB:** So you can — are you content to take an oath on the Bible or do you prefer to make an affirmation?

**FM:** Yeah, no, an oath's fine. It's grand.

**DB:** Will you take the Bible in your right hand, please, and speak the words of the oath?

**FM:** I swear by almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

**C.** **DB:** Thank you very much. Now could I also just complete the formalities? Can you confirm that you received from me a note outlining the procedures to be followed and drawing your attention to certain offences?

**FM:** Yes. I can confirm.

**DB:** And do you have any questions about that?

**FM:** No.

**DB:** OK. Now the good news is that I've had the benefit of getting a copy of the draft of the note of your meeting with Carecall.

**FM:** OK.

**A.**     **DB:** But, as you understand, my role and that of Carecall are slightly different. So what I want to do — and I hope you can help me with this — is to go through, using that note as a framework.

**FM:** OK.

**DB:** But just drawing out the details and checking the things that are particularly relevant to my inquiry.

**FM:** Sure.

**DB:** And, when you're answering my questions, you need to be clear that what I'm interested in is what you personally saw or heard, not what others told you had happened.

**B.**     **FM:** OK.

**DB:** In other words, not hearsay evidence.

**FM:** Sure.

**DB:** Just so that I get the background right, am I correct in thinking that you were in paid employment with Mr McCrea from January 2012 until June 2013?

**FM:** Yes.

**C.**     **DB:** And then, immediately following that — 1 July 2013 until mid-September of this year, you were employed by NI21.

**FM:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. Why did you leave NI21 at that time?

**FM:** Em, I don't even really know how to explain that.

A. Well, after we did the Carecall statement, a report was sent to Basil, so our statements were in the back of it, so he was able to read what we had said about him and then we came into work; it just kinda was untenable that we were able to continue working there. And then because we knew that John was thinking of leaving, then the ~~fat fapp~~ gets reduced, so there wouldn't be money there to employ us, and, to be honest, I don't think Basil would've kept us on after reading what we had said, so we did the — I don't think she's chair of the executive now — but [REDACTED] took Labour Relations Agency, so me and Peter Hutchinson went one day to the LRA and negotiated and just kind of, I suppose, gardening leave. I got 10 weeks, he got eight weeks, and that kind of gave us enough breathing space to mentally be able to get another job, because it was just such a toxic environment that, when John left in July, like I would've had no hope of getting a job or being a sane person, so —

B. DB: And, just to be, as I am interested in this, how did you become aware that Mr McCrea had received copies of what you had said to Carecall?

FM: John McCallister had asked Carecall whether Basil had received the report, and they said yes.

DB: Is that what John told you?

C. FM: Yeah, from the best of my knowledge, yeah. The best that I can recollect.

DB: OK. And, when you were working first of all for Mr McCrea, before you moved to working for the party, what was your role?

FM: Well, technically, I started with him in July 2011. I was on a GAP placement, which is graduate acceleration programme, so I worked for him for six months for free, so then my paid employment started that January.

DB: OK.

FM: So my role was ~~kinda~~ researcher and ~~like~~ constituency worker, so I split my time between up here and Lisburn constituency office.

DB: OK. And was that the Bow Street office?

**A. FM:** Hillsborough Road, so it was at the old office, which closed October 2012.

**DB:** Ah right. OK. I shouldn't have asked the question. And when you were up here, was it Basil's office you worked in?

**FM:** Yes.

**DB:** OK. And then, when you moved over to work for the party, what was your role?

**FM:** Research and policy.

**B. DB:** Much the same, except for the party rather than Mr McCrea.

**FM:** Yeah, and no constituency work.

**DB:** OK. And would it be — it has been suggested to me by others that Mr McCrea was someone who, whatever else he did or didn't do, was someone who made great use of social media and sending texts and using Twitter and so on. Is that right?

**C. FM:** Yeah, he's very active on Facebook, Twitter, email, social media. I suppose you have to these days to keep up with everything.

**DB:** And would it be right to say that he was very open with these and there was wide access to them?

**FM:** Oh yeah, I mean, everyone in the office would've had the passwords for his Facebook, his Twitter, they would've been on all the phones, you know, work phone, his phone and stuff, so we all had access to it, you know. Like, he wasn't, he didn't, you know, like, he could've logged into his Twitter and see who he was direct messaging cos a lot of the time it maybe would've been us who would've done the tweet or put up a picture or statement, you know, all the stuff that goes to social media, so, yeah, he was very open with all that.



**A.** **DB:** OK. And, I mean, there were, on occasion, items on the various social media that might be regarded as quite personal about him and his relationship with others.

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** It would be quite unusual that, wouldn't it, if there was anything secretive about these, for him to be allowing all his staff access to them.

**FM:** He isn't really that type of person though. He's very much more he thinks he's untouchable and his ego kind of gets the best of him.

**B.** So I think he thinks if you hide something in plain sight, people won't think there's anything wrong with it because, you know, if you have someone on your phone and you give your phone to someone, you clearly don't have anything to hide, when, in actual fact, maybe you do, but if you are making it look like it's innocent, then people generally think it is. And, when you are so busy and you've got 100 things going on, sometimes you don't think at the time, you know.

**DB:** Yes. OK. Can I start going through —

**FM:** I have a copy of mine. Can I take mine out?

**C.** **DB:** By all means, by all means. That will speed it up. Just for the benefit of whoever's reading this interview at a later stage, we are referring to a document, which I will now refer to as JMCC4, and it's an interview record of your interview at Carecall on 16 May 2014. Is that right?

**FM:** Yeah. Yes.

**DB:** And I think, to be absolutely precise, it's a draft record of your interview cos it was never actually signed off by you.

**FM:** No.

**DB:** Now, can we start then at paragraph 3, detail of allegations?

**A. FM:** Yep.

**DB:** And what I want to do very quickly is go through each one of these in turn. So, regarding Mr McCrea's conduct towards you as an individual, is there anything to which you took exception?

**FM:** I am sure from reading this you know I'm not exactly, I'm not someone who's a big hugger or a tactile person or I try to conduct myself in the most professional manner whenever I'm in work, so, I mean, hugging people or, you know, commenting on their clothes and stuff, to me, personally, isn't really that, it shouldn't happen in the workplace.

**B.** So, yes, I guess you can read from that in my first interview, and it wasn't even an interview, he grilled me for two hours. Jamie Mackrell was in the room with us and, whenever he left, you know, his demeanour changed, you could see that there was kind of, he wasn't being professional and then, when Jamie came back into the room, he changed again. So, yes —

**DB:** It was conduct that you didn't enjoy.

**FM:** No, I didn't think it was appropriate to be in a first interview, to comment on what someone was wearing.

**C. DB:** That's where we are talking about breaching the code of conduct. It perhaps doesn't quite reach that standard.

**FM:** No, mine definitely does not.

**DB:** And there would be others that would find it perfectly acceptable.

**FM:** Well, OK, if you say so.

**DB:** Now, there's a comment made in 3.2 about an incident about your fiancée's birthday at your fiancée's birthday. Do you remember what year that was?

**A.** **FM:** That would've been, well Ashleigh was with us, so that was, cos Ashleigh was in the room, that would've been 2000 and, it wasn't 12, 13? I think it was just before I left to go to NI21.

**DB:** What month is your fiancée's birthday?

**FM:** May. 3 May.

**DB:** So that would be 2013. May 2013.

**FM:** Yes. Yes, it would've.

**B.** **DB:** Then, if we go on to 3.3, reference to a UUP party dinner. That, I take it, must've been before February 2013.

**FM:** Yeah, it was the UUP party conference, October-time 2011, cos I was still on my GAP placement.

**DB:** OK. Then, in 3.4, you deal with an issue about [REDACTED] from the Alliance Party.

**FM:** Yep.

**DB:** Do you remember roughly when that was?

**C.** **FM:** No. I still worked for Basil. I definitely didn't work for the party. I don't think Karen had gone off sick yet, so I think it was probably between the end of 2012 and springtime 2013 maybe. I'm trying to think if he'd lost the Whip yet or not, so kind of that time.

**DB:** I see there's — I thought I'd read that Mr McCrea's explanation was that he hoped [REDACTED] might move from the Alliance —

**FM:** That wasn't why he took the picture. That's whenever he —

**DB:** No, but I'm wondering if that meant that it was after he left the UUP.



**A. FM:** Yeah, that probably would've been so it would've been 2013. He left February-time, didn't he, so kind of February/March, so springtime 2013.

**DB:** Then there are the references to you finding Mr McCrea's underwear both in the office and in the car.

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** And, when you asked him about that, did he give an explanation?

**B. FM:** Oh, we didn't ask him.

**DB:** Right.

**FM:** Because you don't. The way Basil ran his office and the way he had conditioned Karen to condition us was that you don't ask questions and you don't question him and you just do what you're told and you don't ask anything. So, to find something like that, Karen just picked them up, took them home and washed them because she thought that was just OK. I don't know if she ever confronted him about it, but I knew that that was not my position to do that, so I would not ask him about them.

**C. DB:** So what did you do with the underwear when you found it?

**FM:** I just kicked them under the — at that time, we had like soft seats; I just kicked them under the seat.

**DB:** OK.

**FM:** I wasn't going to touch them.

**DB:** I mean, would it be correct that Mr McCrea — I understand, in common with many other MLAs — would work here during the day and go on straight from here to other events at night and might change in their office?



**A.** **FM:** Yeah, but I don't recall him having an event that he had to change cos usually he would've brought, if it was a black tie or something, his suit into the office and because we would've been the ones to remind him he needed to bring a black tie or a change of clothes in. If he did have to change, that's fair enough. I just don't think your staff should have to walk in the next day and have your underwear sitting in the middle of the floor.

**DB:** Then, in 3.7, you refer to the summer school in Cork. I think that was the Sinn Féin summer school.

**FM:** Yes, Sinn Féin, yep.

**B.** **DB:** Were you there?

**FM:** No.

**DB:** So anything that's in 3.7 is what you've picked up from other people.

**FM:** Jacquelyn personally herself told me, yes.

**DB:** OK. Then, in 3.8, well that's also touched on in 3.9, which is how [REDACTED] dealt with Jacquelyn saying what had happened in Cork. Again, you are relying on what Jacquelyn told you.

**C.** **FM:** Yeah, just what Jacquelyn told me.

**DB:** So, in 3.8, there is an issue about Jacquelyn [REDACTED].

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** Am I correct in my understanding that what happened is that Jacquelyn ended up telling [REDACTED]?

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** And then [REDACTED] obviously told other people, including Basil.

**A. FM:** But Jacquelyn had specifically told her not to tell anyone because she hadn't told her own family or her boyfriend, but [REDACTED] went and told both John and Basil.

**DB:** You don't know whether she told Basil that it was a big secret and he wasn't to tell anyone about it or whether she forgot to do that or decided not to do it.

**FM:** I don't think so. I know there was a conversation at the time with Jacquelyn and then speaking to John as well. So I can't recall. I don't know.

**DB:** She was — Jacquelyn was upset that it had come out in the way it did.

**B. FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** But whose fault it was, you really can't say whether it was Basil or [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

**FM:** No.

**DB:** In 3.10, you are talking about a situation, a hostage, sort of, type situation. I didn't quite understand this and I suspect the notes don't do credit to what you were telling them.

**C. FM:** No. To be honest, this whole thing, the notes aren't the best. There's a lot of mistakes in them and stuff. But, yeah, me and Peter lovingly call it hostage day.

**DB:** What is this all about in 3.10?

**FM:** It was before all the stories broke, they weren't too sure who it was, you know, that was going to the newspaper and all that stuff. So [REDACTED] was up for some reason and, obviously, Basil works here. So they came into our party office. Me and Peter were in the party office, and they came in and just sat down and started questioning us: did we know who it was, did we know like what the story was, and just kinda kept us sitting in the room. Because there was all the stuff with [REDACTED] and the legal letters that Basil had sent him, and there was lots of stuff on Twitter.

A. Me and Peter were sitting there trying to do our work, and the two of them were sitting there and they were kinda talking at us, wanting to know did we know who it was. And Jacquelyn was in Paris at the time, and accusing her of lying of being in Paris and saying, you know, is it her that's selling the story, is she really in Paris, all this stuff. But it's really hard to explain, but it's not even sometimes what they said, it was the fact that you knew you couldn't get up and leave, that they were standing there over you, pacing the floor kinda keeping you in the room until they found out the information that they wanted. You know, at the time, me and Peter think we did know who it was, but we didn't say that we knew who it was. And then [REDACTED] and Basil had this really strange conversation about who managed who, who was the kinda like Jacquelyn's HR manager and all the rest of it. Cos we all knew it was an open secret that [REDACTED] did all the HR problems.

B. She would've come up to Stormont all the time and had these little chats with them and all the rest of it, but Basil was trying to say, you know, he almost kind of said, sure, you line manage them, but then ~~like~~ didn't. And then he phoned John. John and him had a conversation. John wasn't there; it was on the phone. So, I mean, this went on for hours, just sitting in the room ~~like~~ going through all the tweets, going through who it could all be, all the [REDACTED] stuff, like everything. And then they finally left, and Peter went down to Basil's room and just said, look, you know, we feel like we're being accused of something and we felt that they were kind of trying to say that we were being accused of something, and Basil was like no, no, I'm just talking to you as a friend and not a colleague and ~~like~~ all this stuff and then he came marching back up to the room to say, ~~you-know~~, I'm not trying to put you under any stress, ~~you-know~~; I'm talking to you as a friend and all this, but all he really wanted to do was find out what information it was but doing it in such an aggressive way.

C. DB: But was it not quite understandable that he wanted to find out who was spreading what he regarded as malicious rumours about him?

FM: Yeah, but the conversations about Carecall had already started and, if you're innocent, you don't mind kind of Carecall or someone, an independent outside party, coming in to look at it. If you have nothing to hide, ~~you-know~~, and also, you know, not at one point did he ever say he was innocent. ~~You-know~~, he went through could it be Ashleigh, could it be Jacquelyn and all the rest of it.



- A.** So why would you list people who you thought it could be if you hadn't done anything wrong? So I think the way he went about it isn't a way that someone who's an innocent person goes about finding out information, not in such a hostile, to me and Peter who had nothing to do with it and were just trying to work.

**DB:** OK. Then, at 3.11, we go on to events relating to an awayday at La Mon.

**FM:** Yeah.

- B.** **DB:** And am I correct in thinking that, although the party hadn't been formed at that stage, this awayday was all about NI21?

**FM:** Yeah, no, the party hadn't been — I don't even think we'd got a name to be honest yet at that point. It was a day to bring — Basil had been going round meeting people he thought would be good for candidates and the executive and things like that, and wanted to invite Peter cos obviously he was coming on board as head of policy. He wanted us all to go to La Mon to kinda get to know each other and discuss ideas and kind of brainstorm and things like that. So that's kind of why they wanted to organise it.

- C.** **DB:** And so it would be fair to say that this was about NI21 and not about Basil McCrea in his role as an MLA?

**FM:** Em, well, it should've been about NI21 but, I mean, Basil just made it all about himself, so it depends what way you want to look at it.

**DB:** OK.

**FM:** And Basil is NI21, he is the leader of NI21, so it depends how you want to split that up.

**DB:** Yeah.

**FM:** Him being a founder of NI21 as well.

- A. **DB:** I take your point. And I have been told by others that there was a — you seem to be a lot on the same lines — that there was, in the lead-up to this event, there was a fairly heated exchange between Basil and Karen. Is that right?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean it was very stressful. Like, once he lost the Whip, and then we had the all this UUP disciplinary stuff, he was, understandably, very stressed, so the weeks, it was a lot of weeks leading up to this, he was very stressed, very snappy, always shouting at Karen. She couldn't do anything right. You know, cos she did his diary, if she organised something and just say it changed at the last minute — there was an event at Queen's and the venue was changed at the last minute. The people at Queen's forgot to tell Karen, so Basil turned up and it was the wrong place and he like shouted at her down the phone.

- B. I was in the office and I could hear him. So, I mean, it wasn't just that one incident when John McCallister was in the room, where he like was leaning over her desk and screaming in her face. So it wasn't a heated debate between the two of them; she sat there and took it.

**DB:** And did you see that yourself?

**FM:** Oh yeah. I was in the room. I was sitting there looking at John like please make this stop because he was in the worst mood and he was not listening to anyone. You know, that was really bad that day cos I mean he was really like screaming, but, ~~you know~~, that wasn't unheard of in the office. There was a lot of shouting. He shouted an awful lot at Karen and other people if, you know, he was stressed or in a temper.

- C. He would just say I'm stressed; that's all right, I'm allowed to scream in your face.

**DB:** Yeah. OK. Then, in 3.12, we come on to Ashleigh. Is that right? And did you ever see anything or hear anything of a sexual nature between the two of them?

**FM:** I didn't see anything that would be classified as a sexual nature, no. I mean there was things like when were overly — you know, if they were sitting, just say the chairs were here, you know, he would have his arm round the back of her chair or he would feel very comfortable to pick her juice up and drink it.



- A.** There was an event at the Long Gallery that I was at and you know the way sometimes they all sit out and then maybe chairs at the back, so I was kinda just sitting ~~in~~ on one of the chairs and the two of them came in and stood in front of me and, you know, he would stand — they would just stand very close, touching.

**DB:** Yeah.

**FM:** That's not sexual but, you know, it's just I wouldn't stand that close to my boss.

**DB:** And am I right that, from — for the sort of six months before she stopped working at Stormont, Karen appeared to be under a great deal of stress?

- B.** **FM:** Stress caused by Basil, yes.

**DB:** Well, she told you it was caused by Basil.

**FM:** I was —

**DB:** And you saw some things.

**FM:** Well, I was in the office every single day with her and, yeah, I mean I was in the office every single day with her. I could see, I could see what was going on, yeah.

- C.** **DB:** Well, I mean, just to, so as we have it on the record, you've told me about one incident when he was shouting at her.

**FM:** Yeah.

**DB:** Were there others of a similar nature.

**FM:** Yeah, well, there was that time on the phone when he phoned her up and would shout down the phone at her, and he would, yeah, I mean there's a couple of times that she had to go into [REDACTED] room to cool off and hide because he's not the best at explaining things in a cool, calm manner.

**A.** **DB:** And then you mention in 3.14 an event at the Europa. Is this really in the same vein as your comments about standing inappropriately close together?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean, it was, there was always just, you know when you just get a feeling that something's not right but you can't really put your finger on it and there's no evidence —

**DB:** It made you suspicious.

**FM:** Yeah. I mean I didn't have any hard evidence to say either way, but, you know, I mean, being around Basil for three years, when you work long hours and you work that intensely with someone, you do get to know someone and kind of what's going on, and I just had a feeling, but it's just my feeling. I have no hard evidence to say if that was true or not, but —

**B.** **DB:** And then, in 3.15, it records what you were told by Ashleigh.

**FM:** Yes, and —

**DB:** And whether it's true or not, you can't say.

**FM:** And also Neil McNickle sent an email or tweet to John saying that Basil had asked him to do the same thing, to check up on her at the bus stop. So I saw that.

**DB:** How did you come to see that?

**C.** **FM:** I think — I don't really know — I think I was given it to give to Carecall maybe. I think I was given it to give to Carecall. Yeah.

**DB:** But, at this stage, you were working for NI21, weren't you?

**FM:** Yeah, but sure Carecall happened when I was working for NI21.

**DB:** So John gave it to you to give to Carecall.

**FM:** Yeah, but I don't think Neil had sent it to John until all this stuff happened.

**A. DB:** Ah right, OK.

**FM:** He didn't send it whenever I worked for Basil, if that makes sense.

**DB:** And then we go back in 3.16 and 3.17 to Jacquelyn Neglia. How did Jacquelyn pronounce her second name?

**FM:** I think there's a silent g, so Nee-lee-ah.

**DB:** Oh right, OK.

**B. FM:** Cos I remember she used to always say people pronounced it wrong. I think she said there was a silent g.

**DB:** You don't by any chance have contact details for her, do you?

**FM:** I do, yeah.

**DB:** Are you prepared to share those with me?

**FM:** Yeah, no, I can give them to you. I have her email address and her phone number. Obviously, she's in Canada, so I can give them to you; that's no problem.

**C. DB:** That would be excellent because we have had difficulty up till now trying to track her down. And then 3.18 is about [REDACTED] Did you ever see anything of Basil and [REDACTED] together? Or is all you know about it is what you found in the email exchange?

**FM:** Yeah, just, I mean, I saw them together up at Stormont cos obviously we invited her up to events and stuff, but anything untoward, no.

**DB:** And then 3.19 is your analysis of it, which is interesting. And 3.20 is something that Suzanne told you.

**FM:** No. That's why, I mean, these notes aren't very good. [REDACTED] was at the — was that Greenhill and Newcastle, the weekend away they had for NI21. [REDACTED] was there and had said to me that he had seen Basil —



**A.** **DB:** All right. Someone else told you, not —

**FM:** Yeah. No, I was just there on the Sunday. I didn't stay for obvious reasons.

**DB:** I didn't quite understand 3.21. What is that all about?

**FM:** Basil used to have a girl called [REDACTED] that worked for him and did all his [REDACTED] stuff when he was on the [REDACTED]. This is before my time. I've heard it from a couple of different people, but she — [REDACTED] at the time was [REDACTED]; removed her from Basil's office and she had to then work in the UUP party office, and, you know, they were kinda told to ask no questions, she's coming here to work.

**B.** I don't know what happened but, when Karen started, she used to pop down and ask Karen are you OK and check up on her and stuff. So —

**DB:** So is this reference to [REDACTED] —

**FM:** That's wrong.

**DB:** That should be [REDACTED]

**FM:** [REDACTED]

**C.** **DB:** It was the [REDACTED] that was sort of slightly confusing me.

**FM:** No, that's just the, on their behalf, that's wrong. It's the [REDACTED]

**DB:** And then you personally have no knowledge of the thing.

**FM:** No.

**DB:** To do with that. And, again, in 3.22, do you have any personal knowledge of that?

A. **FM:** Well, I spoke to her. She was leaving whenever I was kind of coming in. We had overlapped and stuff, but, again, just from what Jamie MacKrell and [REDACTED] would've told me about what went on in the office and stuff. I was never actually working while she was working.

**DB:** And then, 3.23 is about Jamie Macrell, is that right?

**FM:** 3.23?

**DB:** No, Nigel Macauley.

B. **FM:** Macauley, yeah.

**DB:** And he was taken on by John when Basil was on holiday, is that right? And then Basil wasn't best pleased when he came back.

**FM:** No, he wasn't best pleased. Well, technically, I mean, it was already confirmed with [REDACTED] and John, and there had been a conversation with Basil and John had asked Basil well, if you have anyone better, bring them forward and we can interview them and stuff, and he never did it. So, yeah, I mean, ~~like~~ John did hire him when Basil was away and, as I said there, it wasn't, John didn't do the right thing there and he could've handled it in a completely different way.

C. But, yeah, I don't think — but still the treatment that Nigel received from Basil was not — He should've taken it out on John, not Nigel, cos he was the employee, you know, they're the employer.

**DB:** But you, it is recorded here, you didn't actually witness that. You saw the results of it.

**FM:** Not the hour and a half one, but, obviously, he was in our party room, so any time Basil would come in, I could see, you know, he would snap at him and be shouty and shirty with him and stuff, but I had to leave the room. I went down and worked in John's room when that happened and then I came back up when they had finished.

- A. But, I mean, that wasn't a one-off; it was a continuous again thing. Any time Basil was around him, he just, Nigel just seemed to make him really angry.

DB: I mean the impression you are giving, and I want to be clear if this is intentional or not, is that Mr McCrea was abrasive with his staff and short-tempered.

FM: Yeah. Yeah, 100%, that is the way he is. He's just not a good manager. Some people should be managers and some people shouldn't. He shouldn't.

DB: And do you really put it down to that: he just wasn't a good manager? Or did it go further than that?

- B. FM: It went further than that but that was one aspect of it. He just didn't know how to manage staff.

DB: OK. And then there's 3.24. I'm afraid I don't quite follow that but I suspect it doesn't bear much relationship to what you said.

FM: Is that [REDACTED]?

DB: I think so.

- C. FM: Yeah, yeah, she worked for us for over the elections for about 10 days and then she just left because of the way Basil and [REDACTED] treated her. She was used to a more professional environment, and Basil again is used to people that he can bully and push around and people who are desperate for a job, while she had a lot of freelance stuff, ~~you know~~, she didn't really need this. ~~You know~~, Basil would take on a lot of people, myself included, that I couldn't find a job at the time, so you kinda felt indebted to him. She clearly was established in her career and, you know, didn't need it. So she was with us for 10 days, and part of the reason was the way [REDACTED] treated her and the way Basil treated her and the staff.

DB: And that's another example of his management style.

FM: Yeah.



A. **DB:** OK. And then you go on, in 3.25, what's this all about? I mean is this actually another example of you having a feeling that it wasn't right?

**FM:** Yeah, I mean —

**DB:** Nothing definite to say there was something improper about it.

**FM:** No, I mean, you know, she's a young girl and he spends an awful lot of time with her and at her house. You know, his car was seen there. I mean I've seen it late at night and first thing in the morning. You know, whatever you want to do, if you're consenting adults, do whatever you want, but it's just the fact that she is a young girl and, you know, she had a boyfriend, then she didn't have a boyfriend and she kinda just didn't really see any of her friends, and it was literally she was always with him, she was always working.

B. She was going to buy a car. Went and test drove it and everything and then said, no, because sure Basil can give me lifts; he does that. Again, **like**, I don't know. I mean **like** I tried to ask her and she was **like**, no, I'm fine, so, again, I don't know.

**DB:** I mean is your approach really the line that, whatever we think was going on, if the other party, the female party, doesn't wish to make a complaint about it, then you don't really felt that it's your place to interfere?

**FM:** In relation to Kirsty?

C. **DB:** Well, Kirsty and Ashleigh.

**FM:** I think it was hard, well, it was hard for me cos a lot of people would've come and talked to me about different things, but, from the day and hour I started, I was told that you don't talk about him; everything gets back to him. You know, you don't talk about what goes on, and because Karen was so conditioned to take his side over everything — you know, he would always like a disclaimer, if you have any issues, talk to Karen, she's the office manager. But you knew that **like** she would never do anything about it and she would always take his side. So I never felt safe or comfortable to actually **like** go to her with anything and, you know, it's in my Carecall statement that — I'm sure we'll get to it — once I started working for him paid, originally, I was only working Monday to Thursday.



- A. I was off sick and Basil was going somewhere, so we needed the form in signed to get to ~~the~~ HR and stuff, and it was after the Justice Committee and we had an American journalist over doing something, and I had gone straight up the stairs to type up some notes cos, whatever happened in the Justice Committee, I thought, ~~you know~~, we need to do something about this. So Basil came up a wee bit later. The door was open and he was like, oh, we really need to discuss that tomorrow, and I was like, sure, I'm not in tomorrow, I'm off. So I'd been working Fridays for him for free because there was just so much work to do and I didn't mind, so that Friday I thought I'm going to take the Friday off cos I'm not getting paid to work it, and he just went through me. He started screaming at me. The door was open and there was an American journalist standing there, and I was just sitting in front of my computer. He just: what do I pay you for, what are you good for, what do you actually do? This is ridiculous. And I said to him, I only get paid to work Monday to Thursday.
- B. I've been working those Fridays for free for you, and he was like that's not what I wanted. You were supposed to work full time. The only reason I took you on was that you would work full time. I was like, well, that's what Karen had told me. Karen had filled in my contract with you, Basil. You signed it. Well, you know, I want you to change it from Monday. You're going to change it and you're going to work full time. I was quite upset cos you don't expect to be shouted at like that and told that you're worthless and that you're not doing your job and you're not doing anything. So I went home and I texted Karen and said he's just gone through me for a short cut, and she phoned me: don't talk to anyone, don't tell your boyfriend, don't tell your parents. I was crying down the phone and I wasn't allowed. Don't even tell me. If Basil ever finds out we've had this conversation.
- C. You know, this is the way it was. You just realised that you didn't, you couldn't say anything. There was no one to go to because she was just as scared of him as the rest of us were because, ~~you know~~, he turns everything around to make it out like — With [REDACTED] he made it out that she wasn't doing her job right, when she was doing her job right, because he knew that it was him. In everything, he always says that, you know, people have mental-health issues; that's why they're like that. It's never him. He can never take responsibility for the fact that, actually, OK, sorry, I shouldn't have shouted at you, ~~you know~~, I was just a wee bit stressed or whatever. He will never apologise for that. He never apologised to me for it. He never even brought it up.



A. That's just the way it was, so I always felt that I couldn't go to anyone. I couldn't talk to anyone. And, at that time, **you-know**, we were friendly enough with John and his office but not really and, because you worked for Basil, the UUP didn't really want anything to do with you. So it wasn't until I was taken out of Basil's office and put in with Peter that I actually felt safe for the first time; that I actually here was someone I could trust and I could turn to. Because you didn't really know what to do because, **you-know**, he had an answer for everything. Again, **you-know**, like, as you said, if I wasn't witness to the things, you know, you kinda have to just who's telling the truth and weigh it up. But him as a person, he kind of cultivated this atmosphere of fear in the office, **you-know**, that it was, **you-know**, you didn't ask to leave. You were told when you could leave. You'd be sitting there at 6.30 at night — I was only getting paid till 5 o'clock — you'd maybe been in from 8 o'clock in the morning and you were scared to leave.

B. Or you were sitting there scared of what mood he was going to come in to because you always had to kind of — and I know he's a politician and he's your boss, you know, things like that, but when you're in a small, little room at Stormont, **you-know**, you all have to respect each other, and he had no respect for his staff. I think that was the problem. Because Karen kinda came on board when the whole thing with his sister happened and **like** different stuff; she was just trying to get an office that made him happy so that he didn't shout and he didn't get really cross, so that we were all kinda conditioned **-of** if you want him to be a nice person, this is what you have to do. So it doesn't matter what he does, you just don't talk.

C. **DB:** OK. That's very helpful. Then where did that get us to?

**FM:** I kinda went off there.

**DB:** That was 3.25. And then 3.26 is all about the events just before the election. The rumours and so on. I think we've dealt with that, by and large. We've obviously covered 3.26.

**FM:** OK.

**DB:** I mean that's been incredibly helpful and insightful. Is there anything else that you want to say to me about this matter?

A. **FM:** I don't know if we have enough time. I think everyone has to be held accountable for their actions. You know, especially an elected representative. They are elected by the people. They should be held to a higher standard, and, **you know**, the Civil Service have something in place about the way MLAs can talk to staff, and I know the Committee's looking at the code of conduct and stuff, and I know it is hard because you have to be able to prove where he's broken the code of conduct and things like that. I think, **you know**, it does need to be looked at and, unfortunately, **you know**, whenever you put someone, an employer from any company, a CEO, whenever you have that position of power and whenever they abuse it, **you know**, Basil has a pattern of picking people that are vulnerable and he manipulates them and he can tell your weaknesses, **you know**, and he uses that against you, and he's done it to everyone, and you can see the pattern.

B. You know, I could tell very quickly whenever I got into the office that I was going to have to be a very different person. I think it took them months to realise that I had a boyfriend or anything about my life because I could see that, you know, like Jamie Mackrell would really look up to him and talk to him about, **you know**, his problems and stuff like that, so then he was able to manipulate him whenever Basil needed something from Jamie. You know, all those times that I lent you money or, you know, I helped you with that, you know, you need to help me out. And Karen as well. I mean **like** Karen came from a very vulnerable position [REDACTED] [REDACTED] so she feels, and I said it, you feel indebted to the man because he has given you a chance when no one else has, **you know**, and I am very grateful for that, you know, I got three years' amazing experience.

C. You know, and it is hard cos you don't, you don't want to be seen like you're causing trouble and what's worth kind of sticking your neck out for and saying that this isn't right.

But because I had been there for so long and you see the pattern of the people that he picks, and we would have people that would be in the constituency office with us, you know, who wanted to work, were great wee workers at university and all the rest of it but if they weren't up for swanning around with him or like a bit of craic, he wouldn't talk to them, he wouldn't really care. You know, he used to bring all these people up to Stormont.



A. I used to always say to him, you know, this isn't the 'X Factor', we don't need another sob story here, we need people that are going to like bring added value to the office, ~~you know~~, and do some work. But he was only interested in people who he thought was a bit of fun that he could like parade around with. ~~You know~~, we had a girl [REDACTED] who worked about eight weeks' work experience with us, and we were in the constituency office, and we were in my office in the constituency office and he came in and was like, oh [REDACTED] do you want to go for lunch, and I was like, you know, he picked people that would quite happily not really want to do any work and that's why I think he kinda left me alone cos I produced the work for him. I was the one that did the work. So I was quite happy to do that. I don't want to swan around with him.

B. I don't want to get my picture taken with him. ~~You know~~, I wanted him to be my boss and I always tried to be very professional with him and I think it's just sad that there is so many people that even come up to me now and will say different things, and, ~~you know~~, he's gotten away with it for so long and it's not something that he's just developed. I think it's just a personality trait that he's always had, and then, when you do get into a position of an MLA or anyone with power, it kind of goes to your head a wee bit. And even with the money, he just sees this building as an extension of himself and his OCA and, ~~you know~~, whenever he lost the Whip, he then with his disciplinary, he got the Chair — he was the Chair of DEL at the time — he got that taken away from him and all he did was complain about how he'd lost the money, the 10, 11 grand. Not that he'd lost the Chair of DEL, which he was actually a pretty good Chair. He was good at it and he liked it and people responded well to him. He didn't complain about that. He complained about how he had lost the money.

C. I was sitting there going you pay me minimum wage, which is near enough what you've just lost with your Chair and you're sitting here having the gall to complain to me that you'd lost that money, not that you'd lost the Chair.

And even the stuff with Ashleigh; he was Chair of the DEL Committee whenever he met her and, ~~you know~~, he pursued her to come up to Stormont get her up because me and Karen had to contact her, and she wasn't really that interested, but he just kept going and pursuing her ~~to get her up~~. Again, a girl who has no interest in politics — has nothing to do with politics — he just hunted her like prey. He just was obsessed with getting her up to Stormont



**A.** Me and Karen even said, right, if we don't mention it for a while, maybe he'll just leave it, but, no, if we hadn't given him an update or if she hadn't come up to Stormont, he'd be like why isn't she here, ~~you know~~, giving us a hard time because she didn't want to come up to Stormont or she would come up to Stormont and Scott would maybe be waiting for her because she didn't really know why she was coming up to Stormont, she thought she was just coming up for an hour to talk to him, but actually he wanted her up all the time. You know, it's things like that that you might take one wee bits of pieces that doesn't really seem like anything but then, whenever you put it all together and you step back and you look at the picture that's there, I mean like, it is just hard to see that pattern over and over again and the fact that so many people haven't been able to stand up and, you know, it was to my own detriment because I lost my job whenever I did the Carecall statement so, ~~you know~~, it's not that I'm out to get him or anything and, ~~you know~~, I don't want to see him hung, drawn and quartered.

**B.** I just kind of think that if you are an elected representative, you have to be held accountable for your actions because the people have elected you and you should be held to a higher standard.

**DB:** Of course, Ashleigh, for example, if she had concerns about harassment and bullying at work could've pursued an industrial tribunal care.

**FM:** But, again, it's the power he has over people. He makes it out, and it's not kind of till you kind of maybe get out of it a wee bit that you realise that he isn't actually that powerful as an MLA, that the other MLAs don't really rate him.

**C.** You know, whenever you are up in this building, it's so impressive and again it is because these people are so vulnerable and they don't really know about politics so they think these politicians are so mighty and powerful and you kind of think, well, why would people believe me over him when he's, ~~you know~~, held in higher esteem in society. There is that aspect of it, and, ~~you know~~, you kinda get caught up in it all and, again, when you're in the office and there is that culture that you don't talk about anything and, ~~you know~~, ~~like~~ he knows all these people, very powerful people and things like that, I can understand why people don't take a tribunal.

**DB:** OK. That's very helpful. Anything else?

**A. FM:** I'm sure there's lots of things, but —

**DB:** If you think of anything else that you think would help me in my investigation, by all means, drop me a note or an email or whatever.

**FM:** Actually, one thing before I leave — I'm not going to keep you too long — the Karen stuff. I know Karen is still working for him. Kirsty told me that they were going to get rid of her but one of the reasons he didn't want to was because it would look bad up here because she did security before she worked for Basil so everyone knows her and all the rest of it, and I just kind of think he has manipulated her so much that she now can't see that he is still using her, and just because she is still like, she is here and I just kind of feel so sorry for her that she's here.

**B.** Maybe she's quite happy to be here, I don't know; I haven't spoken to her since I kind of left, *you-know*, but I just — that man's put her, she was off for about a month for work-related stress, *you-know*, and that was down to him, so, yeah.

**DB:** OK. Well, as I say, if there's anything else springs to mind, and if you could either give me or send me Jacquelyn's contact details, that would be very helpful.

**FM:** Yes, I will. Your contact details are on the letter you sent to me, aren't they?

**DB:** Yes, they will be.

**FM:** OK. I will send you that through.

**DB:** OK. Well, the time is now 4.23 and we will terminate the interview. Thank you very much for coming in.





DB 44B

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

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(Email: )

**9 February 2015**

Dear Ms McAteer

**AMENDED TRANSCRIPT**

Thank you for your email of 3 February 2015 proposing revisions to the transcript of your interview on 18 November last.

The transcript has been listened to against the recording of your interview and I am satisfied that with the exception of changing 'fat' to 'FAPP' at page 3a and correcting the spelling of Mr Mackrell's name, it is a true record of what you actually said. Accordingly, I will not be accepting your other proposed revisions. A copy of your proposed revisions will, however, be appended to my report.

It is likely that a copy of the note of your Carecall interview will also be appended to my report.

Yours sincerely



**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

