

23 June 2023

Archbishop Justin Welby
Archbishop Stephen Cottrell

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Dear Archbishops Welby & Cottrell

Our Client : Gilo

I am writing to you on behalf of a client, Gilo. As you may be aware, Gilo is survivor of sexual abuse in the Church of England. As you may recall, our client's case and specifically his treatment by the church and its insurers was examined in some detail by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

In 2019 our client discovered through a SAR (Subject Access Request) that following the Elliott Review (with which I am sure you are familiar) a meeting took place in Church House involving four representatives from Ecclesiastical Insurance, Archbishop's Council communications staff and lawyers and members of the National Safeguarding Team (NST). This meeting took place on August 9th 2016 and we understand focussed on reputation management or as the NST document expressed it "a more joined up approach in relation to press/media on stories".

Our client was very disturbed to learn from this document that the NST, whose role should be safeguarding, had been involved in a meeting about reputation management, a matter which as you will know from IICSA is frequently at odds with safeguarding. Our client tried to find out more about the meeting, and who had convened it. In July 2020 our client lodged a complaint against William Nye for his wholly inappropriate deployment of the NST in this meeting in what our client considers amounted to reputation management in conjunction with Ecclesiastical Insurance. Our client and Andrew Graystone, who was assisting him, met with Canon John Spence who dealt with the complaint on behalf of the Archbishop's Council.

Mr Spence informed my client and Andrew Graystone, in the presence of Clare Worrell (NST) that there was no further documentary evidence for this meeting having taken place and that therefore the complaint could not go forward and was dismissed. Mr Spence also informed my client verbally that there was no evidence at all of Mr Nye's involvement in this meeting and that "anyway he is always on holiday at that time of year".

We have now ascertained that Mr Nye was present at this meeting. Bishop Jonathan Gibbs in one of his last acts as Lead Bishop informed our client of this in a letter dated 1 March 2023.

Three questions arise:

1. Why was our client misinformed about the involvement of and presence of Mr Nye in this meeting?
2. If Canon Spence was right it appears that this meeting was never minuted by Church House officials. Given its significance, why was it not minuted?
3. As far as we are aware, the occurrence of and details of this meeting and the documentation around it was not disclosed to IICSA despite its obvious relevance to their work, and in particular to its investigation of our client's case. Our client is concerned that this is a significant and potentially misleading omission. What is the explanation for it?

These questions require urgent answers and when responding to this letter please set out how you intend to investigate and answer them..

We look forward to your urgent response.

Yours sincerely



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Cc

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