

Witness Name: NICHOLAS HUNT

Exhibits: N/A

Dated: 08/10/2025

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS HUNT

I, Nicholas Hunt, Deputy Director of Firearms and Weapons Policy in the Public Safety Group (PSG) in the Home Office, will say as follows: -

1. I am Deputy Director and Head of Firearms and Weapons Policy Unit in the PSG. I have held this post since October 2021, when the Firearms Policy Unit was created in response to the fatal shootings in Plymouth. In January 2024, the responsibilities of the unit were extended to include policy and legislation on knives and offensive weapons. I was the Senior Civil Servant lead on knife crime in the Home Office from 2014 to 2019. In this period, I was Head of the Tackling Crime Unit between April 2014 and June 2018 and its successor, the Serious Violence Unit, between July 2018 and November 2019. In this time, I oversaw the Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme, the Ending Gang Exploitation and Violence programme and the Serious Violence Strategy. From December 2019 to October 2021, I was Secretary to the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel, which was established to examine the circumstances of Daniel Morgan's murder and the subsequent police investigations, and I oversaw the publication of the inquiry's report in June 2021.
2. I have been asked to provide this statement on behalf of the Home Office to assist the Inquiry's consideration of issues concerning knives and offensive weapons. Home Office activity in relation to these specific issues is largely led by my team and I have more direct knowledge of those issues than does Cathryn Ellsmore, the Director of Prevent in the

Homeland Security Group, who provided the corporate witness statement on behalf of the Home Office dated 25 September 2025. I confirm that I have read her statement and in particular paragraphs 192-293 and Annex B, which deal with knives and offensive weapons, and can also confirm that those paragraphs are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, though they necessarily still cover some events of which I do not personally have direct knowledge. I confirm that I will, to the best of my knowledge and ability, assist the Inquiry with any questions arising in relation to those paragraphs of the statement.

3. I make this statement from information and documents within my personal knowledge; information provided to me by colleagues within the Home Office; and my own experience of the functions and operations of the Home Office.

4. I would like to express my deepest condolences to the families of Bebe King, Elsie Dot Stancombe, and Alice da Silva Aguiar and to all the children and adults so harmed by the attack, and to their families and everyone affected.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signature

Signed:

Dated: 8 October 2025