Monday, 6 October 2025 1 1 evidence but seeking to give a fair, high-level overview 2 2 (11.00 am) of it. 3 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Yes, Mr Moss? 3 So, sir, in relation to the sale and delivery of MR MOSS: Thank you, sir. 4 4 knives and other weapons to AR, the Inquiry intends to 5 Sir, save for one final witness, last Thursday we 5 call one further witness within this topic, Mr Nick 6 reached the end of the live evidence being adduced as to 6 Hunt, who is the Head of the Firearms and Weapons Policy 7 the sale and delivery of knives and weapons to AR. 7 Unit within the Crime Directorate at the Home Office. 8 This is our brief presentation on the other evidence 8 Mr Hunt will be called to give evidence at a later date 9 within Phase 1 and so I will not deal with his evidence which the Inquiry has obtained on that topic. 9 10 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much. 10 in this presentation. 11 Summary of further evidence relating to knives/weapons 11 On the purchase of machetes we have, sir, as you 12 12 know, and for obvious reasons, deliberately focused on, (read) 13 MR MOSS: As we explained at the start of our first 13 and called every witness in relation to, the Hunting and 14 presentation in relation to the attack evidence, for 14 Knives machete supply chain because that purchase was 15 each of the topic areas in our Phase 1 evidence, we 15 not, it seems, age verified. 16 intend to provide a brief public presentation on the 16 Within this presentation, I will summarise briefly 17 other evidence made available to the Inquiry. This will 17 the other evidence received on the other two machete 18 not and is not intended to cover all of the material 18 purchases: the machete and sharpening stone purchase 19 that has been disclosed. Instead, will aim to provide 19 from Springfields of Burton on 10 June 2023 and the 20 an objective overview that makes public key statements 20 machete purchased from Knife Warehouse on 3 October 21 21 and other key materials which have been received by the 2023. In addition, I will then summarise the written 22 22 Inquiry but where the witness has not been called or the evidence which the Inquiry has obtained by two other 23 material has not yet been brought out in the public 23 purchases made by AR, namely seeds from the castor oil 24 24 plant which he obtained from Premier Seeds Direct hearings. 25 Unlike in an inquest, we will not be reading the 25 Limited, that was 19 January 2022 and a sledgehammer 1 from a seller on Amazon called Jimbobs on 10 June 2023. 1 the delivery, that's DPD000006. Mr Johnson explains 2 Can I turn first to the evidential picture on the 2 that DPD records show that the parcel was delivered on 3 two machetes that appear to have been age verified and 3 14 June 2023 at 12.18 pm to 10 Old School Close, Banks, 4 I start with the Springfields of Burton machete and 4 obviously AR's home address. 5 sharpening stone, that's 10 June 2023. 5 Mr Johnson has identified the delivery driver and 6 Sir, you will recall that Mr Luke Bullock of 6 confirmed that the delivery address recipient had the 7 7 Springfields gave evidence on Tuesday of last week. He name "Alice", and that the email address associated with 8 addressed the machete and sharpening stone which AR 8 the order was the a.megalania7@yahoo.com address, about 9 ordered from Springfields on 10 June 2023 and that 9 which we have heard. This was an email address used by 10 delivery was effected by the company DPD. 10 11 At paragraph 49 of his witness statement, 11 DPD have exhibited the photo taken as proof of 12 12 delivery by the delivery driver, that's DPD000007, which SPRB000014, Mr Bullock explained that he was informed by 13 the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit that when 13 shows the parcel in a doorway, as well as DPD's record 14 they were investigating the delivery with DPD, DPD had 14 of the delivery coordinates and Google Maps location, 15 said that they had no record of the parcel being carried 15 which were at DPD000008. Mr Johnson has confirmed on 16 to AR's address at the time of the purchase. 16 behalf of DPD that the name of the recipient taken by 17 DPD have now produced a statement to this Inquiry 17 the driver on the delivery was "RUDAKUBN", and that the 18 from Mr Glyn Johnson, DPD000010, their head of security. 18 delivery was age verified. 19 At paragraph 12 of his statement, Mr Johnson said that. 19 Mr Johnson has explained that DPD's proof of age 20 "DPD has very easily been able to identify the 20 process requires the delivery driver to verify that the 21 information required by the Inquiry team, we can only 21 recipient is over the age of 18, either visually or by 22 apologise and find it unacceptable that ... [the] North 22 checking their ID, and that whilst the person signing

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DPD000009.

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West Regional Organised Crime Unit was unable to

DPD have provided the Inquiry with their record of 3

ascertain a response from DPD."

for the delivery must be over 18 years of age, they do

not necessarily have to be the named recipient. That's

DPD interviewed the delivery driver who had delivered AR's order, the reference for that is DPD000003. His recollection is of delivering the item to a black adult male, who he thought was older than his own age of 46, whom he described as having a "terrible attitude". As this man, who it may be thought was likely to be AR's father, was obviously over 18, DPD explain that his ID did not need to be checked. That was in accordance with DPD's age-verified delivery policies.

When AR's home address was searched, the machete, this machete, and the sharpening stone, which AR had purchased from Springfields, were found on top of the wardrobe in AR's parents' bedroom. Sir, they were in a sealed packaging with a delivery label which read "Alice", then the surname was given, "10 Old School Close, Banks". There are two references for that, MERP001282 and MERP002936, page 23. In his statement to Merseyside Police after the attack, AR's father stated that he had signed for a parcel containing knives that was addressed to someone with a British-sounding name and that he hid the parcel on top of the wardrobe despite AR asking for it. The reference for that is MERP001060 at page 4.

I turn next to the Knife Warehouse machete purchased

of birth entered on the system by the delivery driver for the recipient's age, which was given as 1975, the reference for that is RMG000009. However, they have not been able to recover any photos taken by the delivery driver in relation to the delivery because those photos are stored by a company called Mosaic, which only stores them for 12 months. The recipient's name was recorded as Olakunle, and the reference for that is RMG000008.

When interviewed by Royal Mail, their delivery driver confirmed that he recognised an image of AR from press coverage after the attack, and was certain that he had never delivered a parcel to AR. The driver recalled making a delivery to AR's address on one occasion but could not recall whether the item was subject to age verification requirements. He recalled that, on that occasion, the door was answered by a middle-aged black male of slight build and with short cropped hair.

Mr McAuley has confirmed that, at the time of the delivery to AR's address, it had in place a standard operating procedure which set out the age verification process, the reference for that is RMG000010. In accordance with that process, when a driver arrived at a customer's address, the driver would scan a barcode on the parcel, which would inform the driver whether age verification was required. If it was, the driver had to

on 3 October 2023.

Sir, you will recall the evidence from Joseph Wheeler of Knife Warehouse, who also gave evidence on Tuesday last week. He spoke to AR's purchase of the Black Panther machete on 3 October 2023. That delivery was carried out by Royal Mail and it was carried out using their age-verified delivery service. Royal Mail effected the delivery and have provided a witness statement from Mr McAuley, their UK Operations Director, the reference for that is RMG000016. Having interviewed the driver in question and examined the delivery data, Royal Mail have confirmed that a Royal Mail delivery driver delivered a parcel containing the machete purchased from Knife Warehouse to 10 Old School Close, in Banks, on 6 October 2023 and that that parcel required age verification.

Data from Royal Mail's internal system shows that the item was marked as "Delivered over 25 with Signature". That was done at 15.12, using their tracked 48-hour delivery service, the reference for that is RMG000002.

They have disclosed to the Inquiry the data captured on the deliver driver's digital system, which identifies the delivery driver, that's RMG000008. Mr McAuley has explained that they have been able to recover the year

confirm that they were delivering to a customer at the delivery address (as opposed to leaving it with a neighbour or in a safe place) and they were then prompted to enter the year of birth of the recipient. If a recipient's given age was over 25, the driver would confirm on the system that they looked over 25; they would then be prompted to take a photo of the parcel when it was delivered; they would be directed to enter the recipient's name; and the customer would be asked to sign to accept delivery.

If, on the other hand, the recipient looked under 25, the driver would be prompted to ask to see valid identification to confirm that they were over 18.

A delivery would not be completed and the item would not be handed to the recipient if the ID showed an incorrect year of birth was given by the customer; that the customer was under 18; or the customer was unable to provide ID.

Mr McAuley has confirmed that Royal Mail believes that the age verification process was carried out by its driver in accordance with its standard operating procedure because the recipient, who the Royal Mail believes was very likely to have been AR's father, was both over 18 and appeared over 25, so his age did not need to be challenged.

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I turn now to the two purchases made by AR which we addressed in our opening but about which we did not consider it proportionate to call oral evidence, although those purchases were touched on in the oral evidence you heard last week from Mr Boumphrey of Amazon.

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On 19 January 2022, when he was 15 and a half, AR bought 150 seeds of a variety of the castor oil plant. It was these seeds which he used to make the crude preparation of ricin for which AR was convicted of production of a biological toxin and sentenced to a concurrent term of 12 years. Sir, AR bought those seeds from Premier Seeds Direct Limited through Amazon. Mr Redman the Managing Director of Premier Seeds Direct Limited has provided a witness statement. The reference is PREM000002.

Mr Redman has explained that the order was placed on 19 January 2022 and, once payment was confirmed through Amazon, the order would have been automatically pushed through to the Premier Seeds Direct dispatch system and it was then picked and dispatched 2nd Class by Royal Mail later the same day.

The seeds were ordered in AR's own name but the shipping address was in AR's father's name and the address was the next door neighbour's at 8 Old School

available in packets of 15 seeds. However, while they recognise that a further improvement they could make would be to restrict the quantity of seeds that it is possible to order within a single transaction, they have not gone so far as to implement that kind of a restriction.

Turning to the sledgehammer. On 10 June 2023, the same day that he purchased the machete and the sharpening stone from Springfields, AR ordered a 2.7kg sledgehammer through Amazon from a company called .limbobs

The Inquiry has obtained a witness statement from the director of Jimbobs Limited, a Mr Robert Shaw. The reference for that is JIMB000002. Mr Shaw has confirmed that AR placed an order at 10.35 pm on 10 June 2023 for an Amtech Sledgehammer. However, this order was cancelled by AR and a refund was issued. But shortly thereafter, he placed another order at 11.22 pm for the same item again. That order was completed. Due to the passage of time since the orders were placed, Mr Shaw was unable to access any more information about the orders.

Mr Shaw has confirmed that a sledgehammer is not an age-restricted item in the UK and so no age verification was required at the point of that purchase.

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Close.

The packaging for these seeds was found under the bed in AR's room. Sir, you have heard evidence about the other purchases AR made around the same time as these seeds from Amazon and about whether those purchases cumulatively ought to have raised a concern at Amazon.

Looking solely at the seeds, we note that the sale of the seeds for the castor bean plant are not controlled by any specific legislation and the plant itself is, as Mr Redman of Premier Seeds has attested, widely grown for ornamental use. There was no requirement for Premier Seeds Direct to carry out any age checks, either at the point of purchase or delivery. In addition, in a different context, the castor beans may be used to make castor oil. As the law stood at the time, and indeed now, it does not appear, therefore, on the evidence received by the Inquiry, that the sale of those seeds was inappropriate, as regards Premier Seeds Direct, or that it was, by itself, inappropriate, so far as Amazon was concerned.

Mr Redman has explained that Premier Seeds Direct has taken the decision to de-list the bulk pack size that was purchased by AR, which contained some 150 seeds, and instead they have made the product only

1 Sir, save for the evidence you will hear in due 2 course from Mr Hunt on behalf of the Home Office, that 3 concludes the evidence which we intend to adduce about 4 the sale and delivery of weapons and knives to AR.

5 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: That's extremely useful Mr Moss. Thank 6 you very much.

7 MR MOSS: Thank you, sir.

8 MR GOSS: If we could call Mr Bramhall, please, sir.

SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Certainly. 9

10 PS ANDREW BRAMHALL (sworn) Questioned by MR GOSS 11

12 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much, Mr Bramhall. 13

Please have a seat.

14 A. Thank you.

SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Yes, Mr Goss. 15

MR GOSS: May it please you, sir. Could you give your full 16 17 name, please?

18 A. Andrew Bramhall.

19 Q. Could we have up, please, LANC000270. Is this your 20 witness statement for the Inquiry?

21 A. It is, yes.

22 Q. If we go, please, to page 9 of that, beneath the 23 redaction, you signed that on 30 July 2025?

24 A. I did, yes.

25 Q. Is that statement true to the best of your statement and

- 1 belief?
- 2 **A.** It is.
- 3 Q. Could I start by just getting a little bit of background
- 4 about your experience and your career and your role,
- 5 Mr Bramhall.
- 6 You were a police officer between 1992 and 2020?
- 7 A. I was.
- 8 Q. You were a uniformed officer for your whole career,
- 9 mostly working in Neighbourhood Policing, in the South
- 10 Division of Lancashire Constabulary?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. You describe that as covering Skelmersdale, Chorley
- 13 Bamber Bridge and Leyland, and the South Division also
- 14 covers Banks?
- 15 A. It does, yes.
- 16 Q. You had a role in training other officers for some
- 17 years?
- 18 A. I did.
- 19 $\,$ Q. In 2011, you were promoted to Sergeant and were in that
- 20 rank until you retired in 2020?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. In December 2019, you were a Sergeant in Lancashire
- 23 Constabulary's Community Safety Team?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 **Q.** You describe that as a team which was engaged in trying
 - might have and look to identify funding and
- 2 opportunities for them to pursue a positive activity --
- 3 A. Yes

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- 4 Q. -- with a view to trying to use that opportunity to
- 5 bring them back onto, I think you describe it as the
- 6 straight and narrow?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. As part of that work, would you attend multi-agency
- 9 meetings on a relatively frequent basis?
- 10 A. Yes, very often.
- 11 Q. Could we have LANC000270 back up please and page 2,
- 12 paragraph 10. At the bottom of the page, you say:
 - "We didn't really have an operating manual."
- By that, do you mean there wasn't a written policy
- or document that governed how the community safety team
- 16 worked?
- 17 A. No. I found my colleagues in different areas would
- 18 operate slightly different than I would but, ultimately,
- 19 towards the same goal.
- 20 Q. Was that a problem not having a guiding document in
- 21 terms of ensuring consistency of approach between
- 22 different cases?
- 23 A. I would say it was more of an advantage because it gave
- 24 us more leeway to deal with things on an individual and
- 25 bespoke nature.

- 1 to identify issues before they became problems?
- 2 A. Yes
- 3 Q. It was preventative working, in other words?
- 4 A. It was.
- ${\bf 5} \quad {\bf Q.} \quad {\bf Do} \ {\bf try} \ {\bf and} \ {\bf keep} \ {\bf your} \ {\bf voice} \ {\bf up} \ {\bf Mr} \ {\bf PS} \ {\bf Bramhall}, \ {\bf so} \ {\bf we} \ {\bf can}$
- 6 all hear you?
- 7 A. Yes, apologies.
- 8 Q. That work included work with children?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. It was multi-agency work, you would receive referrals
- from anyone and then worked with schools, youth centres,
- 12 social services and mental health, and so on?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. At paragraph 9 in your witness statement you give
- an example of a teenager who is referred to you with
- an interest in rock climbing. Presumably they had been
- 17 referred to you because of some concern over their
- 18 behaviour?
- 19 A. Yes, I used that as an example. It could be an interest
- 20 in anything that would divert them from --
- 21 Q. But it is not the interest that leads to them being
- 22 referred to you, it is a concern over them potentially
- 23 being drawn into criminal or anti-social behaviour?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You would then try and identify what interests they

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- 1 Q. Did it pose a challenge for new staff trying to get up
- 2 to speed on how the team operated?
- 3 A. It would do, yes. Perhaps they were used to being --
- 4 adhering to policy and procedure that were slightly
- 5 different than what we were doing, which is trying to
- 6 not use the law but to work with people to try and get
- 7 them away from crime.
- 8 Q. Does the fact that there was no guiding document mean
- 9 that the levels of risk that you were operating with,
- 10 for example, what might be too serious for you or what
- 11 might indeed not be serious enough, there wasn't
- 12 anything for officers in your team to refer to, to tell
- 13 what those were?
- 14 A. I think the guiding principle was, could we make
- a difference with this individual, were they ready to
- work, were they ready to change.
- 17 Q. Do you think that some sort of guiding document, even if
- not a wholly prescriptive one, might in hindsight have
- 19 been helpful for the team?
- 20 A. Possibly.
- 21 $\,$ Q. As a sergeant on the team, you were supervising the work
- 22 of other officers?
- 23 **A.** Yes.
- 24 Q. How many officers were there within your team? Roughly,
- 25 if you need to -- I appreciate it was some time ago?

- 1 A. Perhaps 15.
- 2 Q. I think in December 2019, one of those 15 or so was PC
- 3 Paul Harrison?
- 4 A. It was, yes.
- 5 Q. You brought him onto the team quite recently because you
- 6 thought he would be a good fit for it?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. What was that assessment based on?
- 9 A. He was experienced, I had known him for a number of
- 10 years. He had -- he was very personable. When he met
- 11 people, it did not take him many minutes to be able to
- build a rapport with them, which I felt was important.
- 13 Q. Those are obviously important skills in the sort of
- 14 preventative work that you are engaged in?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Can we look then at what PC Harrison was doing with AR's
- 17 case in early December 2019. We are largely, I think,
- 18 dependent on documents for this. You don't yourself
- 19 have any particular independent recall of being told
- 20 about what PC Harrison was doing?
- 21 A. When I saw the minutes of the meeting, no. I didn't
- 22 remember it at all.
- 23 Q. We will come to the meeting in due course. Could we
- 24 have LANC000060 up, please. This is an email from Paul
- 25 Harrison to Mrs Jaeger at The Acorns School on
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- 1 Q. When something was referred to you, there was work that
- 2 you could do that didn't depend on things being referred
- 3 to the MASH?
- 4 A. That is right.
- 5 Q. Which is not to say, of course, that it wouldn't be
- 6 helpful also for there to be a MASH referral, so that,
- 7 as you say, multiple agencies could be made aware of
- 8 an issue?
- 9 **A.** Yes.
- 10 Q. Can we look to LANC000097 please. If we could have the
- 11 lower email on that page enlarged. We can see this is
- the next day, 8.50 on 5 December, an email from Ms Lewis
- at The Acorns, thanking PC Harrison for his email and
- 14 saying:
- 15 "I

- "I have already tried to refer this young person to MASH on 3/12/2019. I tried to contact Matt Chipchase
- MASH on 3/12/2019. I tried to contact Matt Chipchase
 and left a message for a call back for advice. I also
- 18 sent an urgent email to MASH requesting advice and have
- 19 no response to the email as of yet. Please can you
- 20 offer any further advice?"
- 21 Then asking him if he is attending a meeting about
- AR at 11.30 that day at Acorns.
- 24 referral unit, was struggling to get access to the MASH?
- 25 A. Yes, I would say so.
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Is it concerning that The Acorns, as a pupil

- 1 4 December 2019; do you see that?
- 2 A. I do yes.
- 3 Q. It says:

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"We have been made aware by Lucy Parkinson of child & family wellbeing service at The Grove in Burscough of the incidents and concerns regarding the above."

We see AR's name in the subject:

"As requested by Lucy could you please refer this information to the MASH as a matter of urgency so it can be referred to the appropriate departments in the police and other agencies."

So there has been contact between Child & Family
Wellbeing Service with PC Harrison and the CST, and he
is now going back to the school and asked the school to
make a MASH referral.

Why the request for a MASH referral?

- 17 A. MASH is Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, so it wasn't just18 one agency that would try to have a hand in and try to
- 19 resolve the issue.
- 20 **Q.** But anyone can make a referral to the CST; is that21 right?
- 22 **A.** Yes.
- 23 $\,$ Q. It did not need to come through the MASH to be allocated
- 24 to the CST?
- 25 A. No, it didn't.

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- Q. Did you have difficulties working in the CST, trying to
 get access to the MASH or making referrals into it?
- 3 **A.** No.
- 4 Q. Did you find that this sort request saying, "We have
- 5 tried to refer somebody to the MASH but haven't been
- able to get anywhere, can you help?", was a common sortof request to you?
- 8 **A.** Not really, no, it went -- if a referral went in, it was received and --
- 10 Q. But something here clearly -- I'm not saying this is
- 11 down to the community safety team -- but something here
- 12 clearly is not quite right as regards the MASH picking
- 13 up and processing this referral?
- 14 A. Something is not -- I'm reading this as an IT issue,
- 15 rather than a refusal.
- 16 **Q.** Thinking about the meeting that morning, we know from
- 17 other evidence that this was a meeting at Acorns between
- the Child & Family Wellbeing Service from Lancashire
- 19 County Council, the school and AR's parents and, indeed,
- 20 AR himself attended part of it.
- Can we look at the email at the top of the page now.
- We can see there, first of all, he deals with the point
- 23 about the MASH:
- "... I have forwarded your email to a contact ... soI hope they will get in touch."

Then: 1 2 "PS: I have been advised not to attend the meeting 3 as this info on the face of it is of a higher risk than 4 community safety to deal with." 5 Before I ask you about that, can we just look at 6 PC Harrison's description of the information he had been 7 passed, so we know what he was talking about. That's in 8 some later emails. Could we look at LANC000110, please. 9 If we could have the paragraph beginning, "Acorns 10 contacted", and those three paragraphs enlarged, please, in the middle of the page. 11 12 Thank you. So this is, I think on 16 December, 13 PC Harrison's description of what he was told. It says: 14 "Acorns contacted Child and Family Wellbeing ... due 15 to some very concerning behaviour ... 16 "Acorns divulged that [AR] had been accessing mass 17 school shootings online at the school, he has 18 an unhealthy obsession with guns, he draws disturbing 19 pictures and talks about beheadings!!! He had been 20 expelled from a school in Formby for taking a knife in." 21 That's what he then says this information is of 22 higher risk than for community safety to deal with. 23 What he says in that email is: 24 "Speaking to all the staff in my office and Sergeant 25 Bramhall, it was decided quite rightly that this info 1 appropriate for the Community Safety Team to deal with? 2 A. Yes. 3 Q. Can you help us as to why? 4 A. We were more trying to resolve low-level crime, people 5 that perhaps would get into more serious things. From 6 the information that I can see now, he had already gone 7 straight into quite serious matters and his interests 8 were well above us and what we could deal with. I feel 9 that Prevent should, at the very least, be involved in 10 11 Q. Is there a risk of somewhat black and white thinking 12 here: it is either for us or it is for Prevent, rather 13 than saying, "Well, actually this is a potential risk, 14 Prevent may need to be involved but there may be a role 15 for us as well"? A. My thinking is that, if Prevent had ownership of it, 16 17 they would have referred to us for some local work or 18 asked us to do particular tasks. 19 Could we go back to your witness statement please, Q. 20 LANC000270, page 6. 21 If we could have paragraph 27 enlarged, please. 22 This is your recollection of another case that had 23 involvement with Prevent, where you were on the CST team 24 and in that case you say:

"A member of the Prevent team contacted the CST

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1 should not sit with us and should be sent to the Prevent 2 team. The school duly sent off the relevant referral 3 form to Prevent." 4 In your witness statement, you describe recalling --5 at paragraph 22, sir, on page 5 -- you describe asking 6 a colleague who AR was around this time, having heard 7 his name in the office, and someone, possibly 8 PC Harrison, saying "He is not for us Sarge, Prevent 9 have him". There was clearly some sort of discussion in 10 the office, whether that was PC Harrison approaching you 11 for advice or you asking who he was and being told "not 12 for us, Prevent have him"; is that fair? 13 To be fair, I don't remember this at all. 14 Q. Do you think it is likely, given that this email says, 15 "Speaking to all the staff in my office and Sergeant 16 Bramhall, it was decided ... that this ... should not 17 sit with us", that PC Harrison would have consulted you 18 about the level of risk and whether this was one for 19 vour team? 20 A. I think that's likely, yes. 21 That would fit with him being quite a new member to the 22 team as well, wouldn't it? 23 **A**. Yes. 24 Q. Do you think that's quite -- first of all, do you stand 25 by the view that this was a more serious risk than was 1 office and spoke to one of my colleagues who agreed to 2 remain in regular contact with this individual and refer 3 to Prevent should any further concerns arise, which we did." 4 5 That suggests, again, perhaps a slightly more 6 blended approach of both CST and Prevent having 7 an interest in the same person at the same time? 8 A. Q. Do you think, therefore, that in AR's case, even though 9 10 this was a case that you knew had been referred to

11 Prevent by The Acorns from quite early in December, CST

could, in fact, still have retained an interest in? 12

13 A. I felt overall control should have been with Prevent, 14 but I felt reassured that -- from a previous involvement

15 that, had there been some work for us to do, they would

16 have asked us and we would have helped where we could.

17 Q. Was there any other team, other than Prevent, who might 18 deal with cases that were higher risk than were for CST

19 to deal with?

20 A. I'm not aware of any.

21 Q. In terms of general practice, when somebody comes to 22 CST's attention, would it have been normal to carry out 23 checks on Lancashire Force systems for any information 24 relating to them?

25 A. It would yes.

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- Q. We know that, as at 3, 4, 5 December, when AR comes to
 PC Harrison's attention, there was still an open
 vulnerable child investigation, following contact with
 Lancashire Police on 27 October 2019. That was
 an incident where AR had admitted to carrying a knife
 into school on multiple occasions.
 - Would that have been the sort of information that was relevant to CST?
- 9 A. It would.

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10 Q. Could we look at LANC000104, please. The lower email is
 11 an email sent by PC Harrison on 11 December. This is
 12 just after AR has been arrested in respect of the
 13 incident at the Range High School. He gives a summary
 14 to a Merseyside officer of what he knows, and he says:

"The school were reporting very concerning traits and behaviour from [AR]. They explained that [AR] had been expelled from the Range School in Formby due to carrying knives into the school (exact details unknown)."

Does it surprise you that, given that there was a log on Lancashire's Force's systems in relation to this incident and one that had, in fact, still been open when AR first came to CST's attention, that by 11 December exact details of that were still said to be unknown?

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- A. Yes, if it was on CONNECT then it would have been
 searchable.
- Q. Might you also expect a CST officer dealing with a new
 case or a new referral, or someone who has come to their
 attention, to approach an officer who has dealt with
 that individual previously?
- 7 A. Yes.

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- Q. We know that PC McNamee had dealt with AR in October
 2019. It doesn't appear that there was contact with him
 saying, for example: what can you tell us about AR?
- 11 A. I don't know, I'm sorry.
- Q. Could we look, please, to LANC000098. I just want to
 follow the MASH referral through. I'm trying to keep
 things broadly in a chronological sequence.

We saw that PC Harrison said that he had forwarded The Acorns email to a contact in the MASH. This is that forwarding. In the bottom email, the lower email:

"Hi Matt.

"This is the email I received from Acorns this morning.

"I know it's not your area but could you direct this email to the right place and ensure someone gets back to them. It's is high risk."

Then the email at the top, 5 December 2019 at 5.21 pm:

1 A. I'm sorry, unknown by who?

Q. Well, they were unknown to PC Harrison, weren't they,that's what he says?

- 4 A. Okay, sorry. What was the question again?
- Q. It seems that the details of what had happened in
 October 2019, which were available on Lancashire's
 Force's systems, were unknown to PC Harrison on
 11 December; is that right, from this email?

I appreciate you weren't a party to this email,
 Mr Bramhall. I'm just asking, the email says:

"[AR] had been expelled from the Range School in Formby due to carrying knives into the school (exact details unknown)."

So it seems that PC Harrison wasn't aware of those details, was he?

16 A. Just going off the emails, it would appear so.

17 Q. Does that surprise you, given that information aboutthat was on the Lancashire Force system CONNECT?

19 **A.** If he was taking knives into school in Merseyside, it20 wouldn't be on Lancashire system.

Q. We know it had been reported to Lancashire and it was on
 the Lancashire system. So if a check had been carried
 out on AR, you would have expected that to have been not
 "exact details unknown" but that to be, "These are the

25 details we know about it", wouldn't you?

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"Hi Paul,

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"Really sorry I forgot to reply this morning I have forwarded your email onto Jennifer Ashton from the MASH education team, same as Matt Chipchase she will be able to advise school. Matt has not been in contact with school as he is off work at the moment. School should have contacted the MASH education team rather than directly to Matt. In relation to the referral there was no trace of this in MASH.

"Sorry for the delay in replying."

11 PC Harrison clearly doing his best here to make sure 12 this gets to the right place and, no doubt, that's 13 helpful. Is it fair to say that reliance on these sorts 14 of personal contacts is not really how MASH is supposed 15 to work?

16 A. No, it is supposed to be submitted, go through all the17 proper processes.

Q. We spoke about the meeting that Acorns were arranging for 5 December, which PC Harrison said he wouldn't be attending as this was higher risk. That meeting took place without police attendance. The conclusion of it was that there would be a Prevent referral. We have spoken a little about that already, but also a referral to what's called Police Early Action. Is that another

25 name for the CST?

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- Q. That then seems to have led, if we could have LANC000099, to PC Harrison seeking a further meeting on 6 December:
- "Hi Jan,

"I could do with coming to have a chat this morning about [AR]. Would you be available."

Also attending a meeting with Acorn staff that day. LCC000235, please, page 6.

I don't think we have that document available.

That's my fault. But it is a record that shows that

PC Harrison attended a meeting that day with Acorns. It
was on 6 December.

He was subsequently invited, if we could have LANC000100 -- with which I hope we will have some better luck -- and if we could look at the bottom email on that page. This is on 10 December, so as well as a meeting on 6 December, we can see that on 10 December PC Harrison is making arrangements for a further meeting later that week, looking to come into Acorns to prepare for that meeting.

Is it fair to say then that whatever initial concerns there may have been about AR being "too high risk for us", they seem to have softened somewhat and PC Harrison is staying involved, attending meetings

Terrorism Policing North West, to whom he knows
a Prevent referral has been made, throughout 11 and
December; is that fair?

4 A. It would appear so, from the documents I have seen.

5 **Q.** If we could just look at some of those documents. We have LANC000104, page 3. This is an email to an officer in Merseyside Police. It begins, "Hi Tara", and we know that that's a custody sergeant in Merseyside, and it provides something of an update about what CST know about AR. Then if we can go to LANC000105, please.

I'm sorry, could we take that down, please.

I'm going to deal with that in a different way please, sir. We will make sure that that is available but what happens at that point is that email, sent to Tara, is forwarded to PC Thompson in CTP North West and he tries to put her in touch with the Custody Sergeant, and is also put in touch with Officer B, and in turn links that officer in with the investigations team in Merseyside Police. I appreciate you can't see the document but will you take it from me that's what it shows?

22 **A.** Yes.

Q. There is then an email that is sent by a Detective
 Sergeant in Merseyside to a number of different
 officers, including PC Harrison, with an update on

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1 about AR?

A. My understanding is that, until there had been a firm
 hand over to Prevent, then we should keep involved and
 keep abreast. As I mentioned earlier on, we may have
 needed to do some light touch involvement with him.

Q. Everything then is rather overtaken by events on the
 morning of 11 December, when AR attends the Range High
 School and assaults another pupil with a hockey stick.
 He also has a knife in his rucksack and he is arrested,
 as you will be aware, by Merseyside Police officers.

I think Lancashire Force Control Room were informed about what had happened but, in fact, we also, if we look at the top of this email that we have on the screen now, can see that The Acorns informed PC Harrison direct at just before 10.30 that morning; do you see that?

16 A. I do, yes.

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17 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Which number is that document?

18 MR GOSS: That is LANC000100.

19 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much.

20 MR GOSS: We don't need to bring it up but, for your note,
 21 sir, LANC000239 shows Acorns also trying to make
 22 telephone contact with PC Harrison the same day.

23 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much.

24 **MR GOSS:** PC Harrison then acts as something of a conduit 25 for information between Merseyside Police, Counter

12 December. Again, if we could not bring it up,
 please, but LANC000106, providing an update on
 developments with AR while he has been in custody?
 A. Okay.

5 MR GOSS: Can we look then at LANC000107.

6 Sorry, can we take that down, please.

7 Sir, could I ask you to rise for five minutes?

8 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Certainly.

9 (11.55 am)

(A short break)

11 (12.10 pm)

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12 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Mr Goss, can I just say, so that it is on the record, that, because of the small technical 13 14 hitch that we encountered just before I rose, it is 15 going to be necessary, certainly for a period, to 16 interrupt the broadcast of these proceedings so that we 17 can rectify the consequences of that technical hitch. 18 The broadcast will be resumed once that has happened. 19 Thank you very much.

20 MR GOSS: Thank you, sir, and thank you for the time.

Could we go back then, please, to LANC000107. Thank you. This records an email between PC Harrison and Anna Jameson of Lancashire County Council Children's Social Care, CSC, and it is on 13 December 2019:

"Hi Anna.

- 1 "I went to visit AR's address today."
 2 I think the only record of this visit to the address
 3 that we have is in emails. You are nodding your head.
 4 It says:
 5 "Only said hello to [AR] briefly as I am not allowed
 6 to get involved in the investigation."
 - Of course, by this point, there was a criminal investigation being led by Merseyside:
 - "I spoke to mum Laetitia who ensured [sic] me that [AR] would be supervised all the time by her or dad.
 - "I informed them that if he managed to give them the slip she should phone the police.
 - "I got the impression they are still in denial over how serious this actually is."
- 15 It then gives details for a contact in Prevent.
- 16 He then finishes:
- 17 "Any news on the meeting?"
- 18 We will come to that meeting in a moment.

been recorded somewhere centrally?

- Helpful no doubt though it is that PC Harrison was
 passing this information on to Ms Jameson, who was now
 the lead from Children's Social Care for AR, should all
 of this information, these visits, these emails, have
- 24 **A.** Yes.

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- 25 **Q.** Would cases that CST was involved in ordinarily have had
- 1 not the actual text of the referral?
- 2 **A.** Yes.
- 3 Q. There wasn't any such record created in this case, was 4 there?
- 5 A. Clearly, at the time, I thought there was because I have
- 6 asked Paul in an email to update CONNECT with the
- 7 minutes of the strategy meeting.
- 8 Q. That's a couple of months further down the line but,
- 9 yes, we may come to that. You thought there was but, in
- 10 fact, there's not been any such record located, has
- 11 there?
- 12 A. I don't know.
- 13 Q. Do you think the absence of an operating manual might
- 14 have been a factor here? There was nothing telling
- 15 somebody new to CST that the work they are doing needs
- 16 to be recorded on Force systems?
- 17 A. It was practice for us to record all of our cases on --
- open a CONNECT case and record everything on it.
- 19 I don't know why Paul hasn't.
- 20 **Q.** Can we come then to the strategy meeting, LANC000054,
- 21 please. You are one of the addressees for this and we
- 22 can see this is an email from Ms Jameson on 13 December
- 23 2019, inviting you and a number of others to a strategy
- 24 meeting in respect of AR's family?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 some sort of log or record on Lancashire's systems?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 $\,$ **Q.** Would that be a vulnerable child log on CONNECT, for
- 4 example?
- 5 A. CONNECT.
- 6 Q. Some sort of log on CONNECT?
- 7 A. Yes, it was multifaceted, you could use it for putting
- 8 in, for example, a custody record, a crime
- 9 investigation, that kind of thing.
- 10 Q. We have seen vulnerable child investigations on there,
- or vulnerable adult investigations, would that be the
- 12 sort of thing you might use?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. If there had been such a log, such a record on CONNECT,
- 15 that would have ensured that all of this information
- that is coming to and from and through PC Harrison was
- 17 recorded in one place and available for other officers
- in the future, wouldn't it?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. That would have included, for example, the fact that
- there had been a Prevent referral for AR, you would have
- 22 expected that to be recorded on that log.
- 23 A. At least a note of it, whether it was the referral
- 24 itself.
- 25 **Q.** Yes. So a note that there had been a referral, perhaps
- 1 Q. That's come to you on a Friday, about 3.45 in the
- 2 afternoon, for a meeting on the Tuesday morning. Was
- 3 that a normal period of notice for one of these
- 4 meetings?
- 5 A. It's not unusual.
- 6 Q. Would that give you sufficient time, including over the
- 7 weekend, to prepare for that meeting?
- 8 A. I don't think I opened that email until the Monday
- 9 morning
- 10 Q. You wouldn't have picked it up until the Monday morning?
- 11 A. I replied on the Monday morning.
- 12 Q. It was, I think, routine for a Sergeant to attend these
- 13 kinds of meetings --
- 14 **A.** Yes.
- 15 Q. -- part of making sure that there's sufficiently senior
- 16 representation there, that decisions can be made
- 17 effectively?
- 18 **A.** Yes.
- 19 Q. You don't, I think, recall the meeting and you make that
- very clear at paragraph 14 of your witness statement,
- 21 page 4.
- 22 **A.** No.
- 23 Q. But you did attend it with PC Harrison?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 $\,$ Q. In terms of preparation for that meeting, I think you

		The South	nport Inqui	ry	6 October 2025
1		think you may have relied quite heavily on PC Harrison's	1		have some knowledge of it and I would have been able to
2		involvement with the case?	2		get clarification from PC Harrison, should I have needed
3	A.	Yes.	3		it.
4	Q.	Was that normal and appropriate for you as the senior	4	Q.	Can we look at LANC000110. This is an email we have
5		representative going?	5		looked at already, it is from PC Harrison on
6	A.	Yes, he would have had fine detail of the case, rather	6		16 December, so the day before the strategy meeting, and
7		than just a summary that I might have picked up from	7		it sets out PC Harrison's thoughts on the case. Is it
8		elsewhere.	8		likely that this would have been the sort of information
9	Q.	What steps do you take, as the senior participant from	9		he would have been briefing you on that day or perhaps
10		Lancashire Constabulary in this meeting, to gain	10		the following morning, before the strategy meeting?
11		information about AR before attending?	11	A.	Yes.
12	A.	I would have been heavily reliant on Paul. I don't	12	Q.	It is an email, I think, to Inspector or possibly Chief
13		believe I did any research myself.	13		Inspector Dixon, can you just help us with who she was?
14	Q.	Would there have been any steps, would you have expected	14	A.	Inspector Dixon was my line manager.
15		PC Harrison to take any steps to get up-to-date	15	Q.	Again we have looked at some of the details already, he
16		information from other agencies or was that the purpose	16		sets out some of the information he received from the
17		of the meeting?	17		Child & Family Wellbeing Service and from The Acorns;
18	A.	Yes, he had been involved, from what I see now, right up	18		sets out the fact that there had been a Prevent
19		to this meeting, so was quite abreast of the situation.	19		referral; sets out the contact he has made with various
20	Q.	At paragraph 21 of your witness statement, you say you	20		individuals, including the custody office in Merseyside;
21		can't recall what you were aware of about AR's history	21		sets out that he has been contacted with the Custody
22		or background prior to the meeting. Do you think you	22		Mental Health Nurse, and gave them information. That's
23		would have had some sort of briefing at the time from	23		Ms Hallaron.
24		PC Harrison?	24		Then if we go over the page, please, he notes the
25	A.	From what I have read now on the emails, clearly I did 37	25		fact that he visited the home address to discuss 38
1		safeguarding with the family:	1		this morning and [AR] will be coming to Prevent."
2		"Parents are alarmingly playing the situation and	2		Do you think it's likely that that email, a few
3		his behaviour down."	3		hours before the strategy meeting, would have been drawn
4		Then mentions that he is attending a strategy	4		to your attention before you attended that meeting?
5		meeting tomorrow. He finishes:	5	A.	If Paul had picked that up, he would have reassured me
6		"Nobody told me I would be dealing with	6		that Prevent were taking ownership.

1		safeguarding with the family:
2		"Parents are alarmingly playing the situation and
3		his behaviour down."
4		Then mentions that he is attending a strategy
5		meeting tomorrow. He finishes:
6		"Nobody told me I would be dealing with
7		terrorists!!!!!!!!!!""
8		Then a large number of exclamation marks.
9		Can we take it then that the view that you would
10		have been likely briefed on by PC Harrison was to the
11		effect, "I think he is a terrorist"?
12	A.	That and the fact that Prevent were interested in him
13		would have made me think that he had that kind of
14		leaning.
15	Q.	It may be that that number of exclamation marks

- indicates that this is slightly tongue in cheek but, 16 17 certainly, it is flagging a clear view that this is 18 a case where potentially terrorism is an issue and Prevent are involved? 19
- 20 A.
- 21 Q. Then could we look, please, at LANC000109. This is 22 an email from PC Thompson in CTP North West, Prevent, to 23 PC Harrison, on the morning, 7.07, of 17 December 2019: 24 "Good morning

25 "I will be attending a strategy meeting at 10.00 am

o Prevent." nail, a few uld have been drawn that meeting? ave reassured me 7 Q. Thank you. That can come down, please. You and 8 PC Harrison were the only attendees at that meeting from 9 Lancashire Constabulary?

10 A. Yes.

Q. It was your responsibility, therefore, to bring all 11 12 relevant information from the Force to that meeting?

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14 Q. We have talked about the 7 October call, AR carrying 15 knives at the Range High School, that was on CONNECT but that it didn't seem PC Harrison had all the details of. 16 17 Do you think that you and PC Harrison between you,

18 without knowing full details of that incident, were in 19 a position to bring all the relevant information from

20 Lancashire to that meeting?

21 A. The Range High School is Merseyside and Merseyside 22 officers were attending the meeting. So they had more 23 relevant information than we did. It was their 24 information that we were privy to.

25 Q. The Range High School was in Merseyside and, certainly

- 1 for the incident on 11 December, Merseyside had the lead
- on it. But for the one in October 2019, that had been
- 3 recorded on a Lancashire system by PC McNamee?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. That information doesn't seem to have been something
- 6 that you and PC Harrison had made yourselves aware of
- 7 prior to this meeting; is that fair?
- 8 A. It is fair, yes.
- 9 Q. Your role, I think -- and you say this at paragraph 24
- 10 of your statement -- at a strategy meeting was to listen
- 11 to the issues raised and discuss solutions or
- 12 interventions and I think that would lead to the setting
- 13 and allocation of tasks with deadlines for each agency.
- 14 Is that a fair summary?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Had you considered before the meeting what sort of
- 17 things might fall out of it as regards the risk posed by
- 18 AR'
- 19 A. I would have imagined it would be reasonable to assume
- that Prevent would ask us to do some work.
- 21 Q. For the meeting itself, you are dependent on the minutes
- 22 of it?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. You have no independent recollection of it now. Can we
- 25 have those minutes then, please, LANC000004. Given that
 - Q. The first update is then from DC Murphy, the
- 2 Investigating Officer from Merseyside?
- 3 A. Yes.

- 4 Q. Then the next page, please. We then have an update from
- 5 Stephanie Hallaron at the Criminal Justice Liaison and
- 6 Diversion Mental Health Team?
- 7 **A.** Yes.
- 8 Q. Then from the Range High School. But there are a number
- 9 of different agencies contribute before Prevent do; is
- 10 that right?
- 11 A. Yes.

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- 12 Q. If we go to the next page, please. In fact, if we can
- go to page 6. At the bottom of the page, we get the
- 14 contribution from PC Thompson:
 - "Carmen Thompson from Prevent identified that she will be completing an assessment regarding AR and
- 17 considering if a referral to Channel programme would be18 appropriate for him."
- 16 appropriate for film.
- Then looking at the next page. On the "Agreed actions":
- 21 "Prevent team to commence initial assessment."
- 22 **A.** Yes.
- ${\bf 23}~~{\bf Q}.~~{\bf There's}$ nothing in these minutes that say anything as
- 24 clear as, "Prevent are to be the lead agency", is there?
- 25 **A.** Not on these minutes but from the email to PC Harrison, 43

- 1 you are dependent on the minutes, have you reviewed
- 2 those carefully as part of preparing to give evidence
- 3 today --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- and as part of preparing your witness statement?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. If we could go to the second page, please. We have the
- 8 list of attendees. We can see that you are there as
- 9 Community Safety Sergeant in the middle and then
- PC Harrison Community Safety Officer, second from thebottom.
- 12 I'm not going to go through all of them but we have
- 13 PC Thompson, she is down as being from the Police Early
- 14 Action team. As you said, that is another name for your
- 15 team. In fact, she is from Prevent?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. You considered that Prevent were the lead agency for
- 18 this by this stage, didn't you?
- 19 A. Yes
- 20 Q. It wasn't Prevent chairing this meeting, was it?
- 21 **A.** No.
- 22 Q. If we could go to the third page, please, we can see
- 23 that the meeting is opened by Matt, who I think is from
- 24 Children's Social Care?
- 25 A. I believe so, yes.

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- 1 that's where we were.
- 2 Q. It doesn't sound, from this meeting as a whole, as
- 3 though Prevent have taken ownership of AR, does it?
- 4 They are conducting what they describe as an initial
- 5 assessment.
- 6 A. Not the wording on these minutes, no.
- 7 Q. This meeting took place after that email from that
- 8 morning, didn't it?
- 9 **A.** Yes.
- 10 Q. It supersedes that email, doesn't it?
- 11 A. Well, the email was sent 7.00 in the morning, wasn't it,
- 12 prior to this?
- 13 Q. Yes, and this was then later on the same day?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. So even if the email first thing in the morning has
- 16 given the clear impression he is coming to Prevent, you
- 17 now, having met with PC Thompson, know that, in fact,
- 18 what is happening is it's an initial assessment to see
- 19 if he is appropriate.
- 20 A. I can't remember, sorry.
- 21 **Q.** Given that you are dependent on the documents and you
- studied these minutes carefully, can you help us with
- 23 why your statement is so adamant that Prevent are to be
- 24 the lead agency and have taken ownership of AR, when
- 25 what they were saying in the strategy meeting is they

1		are to commence an initial assessment?	1		Further observation on the parents:
2	A.	I was still under the impression that Prevent were	2		"[Mum] has generally been very quiet. Dad was
3		ownership and, on reading this, is that this is part of	3		dismissive when police contacted him to say that [AR]
4		their process, that of taking ownership.	4		needed a parent with him and stated he couldn't get
5	Q.	Do you think it was clear to everyone in the meeting	5		there as he was busy."
6		that Prevent were to be the lead agency and had	6		If we look at the bottom of this page, please, Range
7		ownership of this?	7		High School talk about him being:
8	A.	I couldn't say, in all honesty.	8		" challenging and inappropriate in some things he
9	Q.	Can we turn to some of the other content of the meeting.	9		said to teachers and children alike and when challenged
10		Can we go back to page 4, please. I just want to look	10		doesn't accept any responsibility. Will basically argue
11		at some of the information that has been shared between	11		even in the face of evidence to the contrary."
12		agencies in that meeting.	12		Then the next page, please. First of all, it
13		At the top of the page, first full paragraph,	13		covers, towards the top of the page, the issue at the
14		Merseyside Police share that there were some concerns at	14		Range where AR had been bringing a knife into school on
15		the interview where he laughed at inappropriate times.	15		ten occasions. Then there is a further updates at the
16		There wasn't really any challenge from his mother who	16		bottom from Acorns, his current school, saying:
17		was present as appropriate adult.	17		" He's begun to display strange behaviours
18		Then also, the next paragraph down, there is the	18		creating issues with other children and occasionally
19		fact that he had approached the victim's sister the day	19		fixating on staff members. There have also been issues
20		before and called her an unpleasant name via Instagram.	20		within Acorns where he's used the school computers to
21		You have the update from Ms Hallaron, which	21		'research' school shootings, et cetera.
22		includes:	22		"He has disclosed that in his opinion he's been
23		"[He said] he'd intended to kill [his victim] and	23		bullied however this has not been evidenced when school
24		would have done so if he'd found him. She advised he	24		have looked into this."
25		showed no remorse."	25		Then on page 6, please, it talks about the update
		45			46
1		from Early Help. It talks about AR being quite a force	1		identifying risks of harm to AR, rather than from him?
2		in the household appearing to dominate discussion and,	2	A.	Just looking at the minutes of this meeting, I think
3		at times, shout down his parents.	3		there was probably a bias towards harm to them rather
4		Then, at the very bottom of that page:	4		than from them but I think it was covered.
5		"Concerns summarised and discussion held regarding	5	Q.	There doesn't appear to be any record of input from you
6		risk of significant harm. It was agreed that there is	6		or PC Harrison in this meeting, does there?
7		a risk of re-offending from [AR] however at this point	7	A.	No.
8		based on the interactions so far there is no evidence	8	Q.	Could we look at LANC000116. This is another email from
9		that the children [that is AR and his brother] are	9		PC Harrison to Inspector Dixon. This one from quite
10		presently at risk of significant harm."	10		some time later, 7 August 2020. It seems to be some
11		Do you think that, in the round, the information	11		form of record of this for a case file or an assessment
12		shared and discussed at that meeting revealed a high	12		but it sets out some of the details and then, if we
13		risk of harm to others from AR?	13		could go down, please thank you there is a short
14	A.	Yes.	14		description from PC Harrison at this meeting, where he

That would suggest there may have been some contribution from PC Harrison, albeit it is only recorded in August 2020?

- 23 A. Yes, that's what I'm picking up from the email.
- 24 Q. You don't have any recollection of that yourself?
- 25 **A.** No.

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Do you think there was a focus within the meeting on 47

Q. Looking at the way that the paragraph we have just

looked at -- in fact, if we go one page further on

"... no evidence at this time that either child is

multi-agency support and assessment on various areas of

at risk of significant harm ... acknowledged need for

need and a level of risk based on [AR's] offending ...

As such a follow-up strategy meeting will take place to

consider the risks to the children and further plan the

because we have the reasons for decisions:

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assessment."

- Q. You are shaking your head to indicate --1
- 2 A. No, I'm sorry.
- 3 **Q.** Just for the transcript, you understand that?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Other than that possible contribution, can you help us
- 6 with why there wasn't any contribution from the police
- 7 force for the area where AR lived and where he was now
- 8 attending school?
- 9 A. I can't remember the meeting, so whether it was said and
- 10 not recorded, I don't know.
- Do you think that that suggests there may have been 11 Q.
- 12 a failure by you and PC Harrison to really engage with
- 13 the purpose of this meeting?
- A. Not really, no. 14
- Q. The Community Safety Team really ought to have had 15
- 16 a role in these circumstances, shouldn't it?
- 17 A. Yes.
- Q. But from your perspective, it was Prevent who were the 18
- 19 lead agency and that meant no ongoing role for you,
- 20 unless they specifically asked; is that a fair
- 21 characterisation?
- 22 A.
- 23 Q. I think in your statement you also refer to considering
- 24 that Merseyside Police, as the investigating agency, had
- 25 a role, given both the ongoing investigation and the
- 1 that he kept on putting people in contact with each
- 2 other, providing updates about the criminal
- 3 investigation and, I think at one point also,
- 4 received -- if we could have LANC000111 -- he has
- 5 forwarded to him an attachment described as "Chronology
- 6 of [AR] at The Acorn School".
- 7 We don't need to bring it up, sir, but the
- 8 attachment itself is at LANC000235.
- 9 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you.
- 10 That is two days after the strategy meeting?
- A. Yes. 11
- MR GOSS: So although there may be no further role at the 12
- 13 strategy meeting, PC Harrison does seem to retain some
- 14 further involvement with AR's case after that meeting;
- 15
- A. Yes, I would have expected him to, with his ongoing 16
- 17 support with the school and Children & Family Wellbeing
- 18
- 19 Q. If a case was found not to be appropriate for Prevent or
- 20 for Channel, would you expect the case to come back to
- you? 21
- 22 A. Potentially.
- 23 Q. Would that be directly from Prevent or would that be via
- 24 a referral from another agency or perhaps another
- 25 multi-agency meeting?

- 1 bail conditions they had imposed. Those bail conditions
- 2 would only last for the duration of the investigation,
- 3 wouldn't they?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. When it comes to, if I can put it this way, preventative
- 6 policing, would it not normally be for the force where
- 7 somebody lives to take the lead on that?
- 8 In normal circumstances, yes.
- 9 In this case, though, it wasn't normal circumstances
- 10 because of the Prevent involvement, is that --
- 11 Α.
- 12 Q. After that meeting, there were no actions for Lancashire
- 13 Constabulary and I think you were informed --
- 14 LANC000135 -- by Ms Jameson that you didn't need to
- 15 attend the follow-up meeting. We can see here an email
- 16 to you:
- 17 "Hi Andy,
- 18 "Thanks to you and Paul coming on Monday.
- 19 "I have not sent you or Paul an invite to the next
- 20 one given there's no further role for your agency.
 - "I just wanted to say thanks for coming!!"
- 22 You see that on 19 December and it is above
- 23 an invitation to the follow-up meeting on 6 January?
- 24 A.

24

- 25 There was though still further action by PC Harrison, in
- 1 I have not come across this before, so I wouldn't know.
- 2 Q. Do you think, in hindsight, perhaps you should have
- 3 pushed back on the suggestion that there was no further
- 4 CST role and said, "Actually, we are interested in
- 5 staying involved, we would like to attend the further
- 6 meeting, even though there are no actions for us"?
- 7 A. I would have expected to have been invited, if it was
- 8 felt that we had something to contribute. What I would
- 9 be worried about is stepping on another agency's toes
- 10 and getting in the way.
- 11 Q. Pushing back and saying, "Actually, we would quite like
- 12 to attend", it is unlikely to be seen as treading on
- 13 toes, if you are holding a watching brief, to make sure
- 14 what's going on with the case?
- 15 A. That could have happened.
- Q. It would, to some degree, have represented you taking 16
- 17 ownership of the fact that there was someone displaying
- 18 obviously high risk behaviour in your force area, even
- 19 if you weren't going to be the lead agency?
- A. Like I say, we could have said that. 20
- 21 Q. Because when it did come to the 6 January meeting, the
- 22 view from Prevent at that stage was, it was not felt he
- 23 has any issues regarding the Channel/Prevent programme,
- no concerns that he was being led into criminality or 25 radicalised, but the wider view of the meeting was that

1 there was a risk to AR of further criminality. 2 Again, we do not need to bring it up but it is 3

LCC000023.

In those circumstances, where Prevent have said it is not for them but there is a risk of further criminality, is that not exactly the sort of space that the CST team would expect to operate in?

8 A. Potentially.

9 Q. But since you weren't at that meeting, it would have had 10 to have been referred back to you by someone who was?

11 Α.

4

5

6

7

12 Q. It is fair, Mr Bramhall, to put this in its wider 13 context, by February 2020, AR had been charged with 14 criminal offences and those, in due course, led to him 15 being open to the local Youth Offending Service, which

was an organisation you work alongside?

17 A. Yes.

16

18 Q. To some degree, no doubt, there is a degree of overlap 19 between the kind of support you could offer and that 20 that they could offer?

21 A. They tended to do their own work. So we didn't have 22 an overlap of that.

23 Q. But there were, at the very least, opportunities further 24 down the line for you to be re-engaged if somebody else 25 had thought that appropriate?

1 to say -- to reassure him, he was a new in service 2 officer, so I wanted to reassure him that he's done 3 well, keep him updated and I know from experience that 4 when you are young in service, you tend to think that 5 people will blame you, whether it's your fault or not. 6 So I just really wanted to reassure him, so, perhaps 7 badly worded.

8 Q. I mean, there is no doubt that putting a high-risk 9 vulnerable child referral, or PVP, onto the system in 10 October 2019 was the right thing to do and the desire to 11 reassure him, entirely understandable. Given that that 12 referral had been put on there in October 2019, was it 13 concerning to you, as someone involved in preventative 14 policing, that almost exactly the thing that was being 15 warned about in October had come to pass two months 16 later?

17 A. It was concerning, yes.

Q. Despite that referral, whatever interventions there may 18 have been, simply haven't been effective? 19

20 Α. As I say, what I was saying the referral had gone to 21 Prevent and that's where I understood it remained.

22 Q. Did you frequently have issues where matters were 23 referred to the MASH and then it appeared as though, in 24 fact, nothing was really done about it?

25 A. Not that I recall.

A. Yes. 1

2 Q. Could we have LANC000194 up please. This is an email from you to PC McNamee after the strategy meeting. By 3 4 this point, clearly you have become aware of the October 5 referral on CONNECT --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- because you refer to him putting it on there?

8 Α.

Q. 9 You are reassuring him that he has done the right thing?

10 A. Yes.

11 The way you have expressed that, you say:

"You did exactly the right thing by inputting a PVP

13

12

14 It is Protecting Vulnerable People, it is an old 15 phrase for the referral form?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. "... on CONNECT that was then shared with other 18 agencies. [AR] has since gone to his old school in 19 Southport and committed a serious offence. Due to your 20 timely PVP the finger of blame will not be pointed in 21 your direction."

22 It might be thought that's a rather cold 23 reassurance, the finger of blame is going to point at 24 somebody but just not him; is that fair?

25 It's perhaps a poorly written email but what I intended

1 Is there a degree of thinking in this email of: so long 2 as you submit a PVP form, it is fine, someone else will 3 own the risk?

4 A. No, I don't think so. I think Alex, PC McNamee, had 5 done what he should have done at the time and it would 6 then be picked up by somebody that could spend the 7 appropriate amount of time. It wouldn't be for 8 a response officer, who is rushing from job to job, to 9 try and take a long-term care of this individual.

10 Q. All right. That can come down now, thank you.

11 Could we go back to your witness statement, 12 LANC000270. This is the last topic I want to deal with, 13 Mr Bramhall. Can we go to page 8, please.

14 At paragraph 39, you set out that, from your 15 perspective, you thought that --

16 I think it might be the next part of paragraph 39, onto the next page. Thank you. 17

18 You were satisfied with the number of officers 19 working on the CST, as well as their experience and 20 their commitment?

21 A.

22 Q. I think you then left Lancashire Constabulary in June 23 2020 on retirement?

24 A.

25 Q. Was that partly influenced by the fact that, in the

- 1 Covid-19 pandemic, there wasn't really an opportunity
- 2 for you to do meaningful work with the people you were
- 3 trying to help?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. So when thinking about opportunities to engage AR in
- 6 this sort of period, if you had begun to engage with him
- 7 in January 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic would have
- 8 seriously limited what you could do from March 2020
- 9 onwards?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. At 41, on page 9, you set out the benefits that you
- 12 consider preventative policing can bring. As you say,
- 13 you have not been a member of the Force for some five
- 14 years now and so, to some extent, this is your view from
- 15 2019/2020. But could you just set out for us what
- 16 advantages you think there are in preventative policing?
- 17 A. As I mention in my statement, it is difficult to
- 18 quantify preventing something happening. So -- because
- 19 figures don't support something that hasn't happened,
- you can show that there has been a reduction in various
- 21 things. So that was, for example, you may get somebody
- who rings the police 10 times a day, 15 times a day. If
- you reduce it down to one time a day, it is a win. So
- 24 as I say preventative, large or small, it may well -- it
- 25 was certainly worthwhile doing.
 - 57
- 1 as to why that might be?
- 2 A. Sorry, no recollection.
- 3 Q. Given the evidence you have given about the risk, and
- 4 the perception that we can see from the documents we
- 5 have been shown about concerns over mental health or
- 6 developmental disorder and what FCAMHS is for, would you
- 7 not have expected them to have been present at that
- 8 meeting?
- 9 A. It would have been useful if they had been.
- 10 Q. Yes. Finally, in your view, whose responsibility was it
- 11 to identify and invite relevant agencies to that
- 12 meeting?
- 13 A. It was Lancashire Social Services who was doing the
- 14 organising.
- 15 MR WEATHERBY: Right, thank you very much.
- 16 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you, Mr Weatherby.
- 17 Mr Bramhall, thank you very much for your evidence.
- 18 You are now free to go.
- 19 A. Thank you.
- 20 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Shall we take the next witness after
- 21 lunch?
- 22 MR GOSS: Yes, sir.
- 23 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Shall we sit then again at 1.55 pm.
- 24 MR GOSS: Yes, sir.
- 25 (12.55 pm)

- 1 Q. Thank you. Lastly, Mr Bramhall, from me, from the point
- 2 in early December 2019, when concerns were raised with
- 3 CST through PC Harrison about AR's conduct, from your
- 4 perspective, who was responsible for assessing and
- 5 addressing the risk that AR posed to others?
- 6 A. Prevent.
- 7 Q. Did that change at any stage?
- 8 **A**. No
- 9 Q. Within Lancashire Constabulary, in that period when CST
- 10 were involved, was there anyone who had that
- 11 responsibility?
- 12 A. Sorry, we are dealing with AR?
- 13 Q. For dealing with the risk posed by AR to others.
- 14 A. No.
- 15 MR GOSS: I will just look to see if there's anything from
- 16 others.
- 17 Yes, I think so.
- 18 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Yes, Mr Weatherby.
- 19 Questioned by MR WEATHERBY
- 20 MR WEATHERBY: Thank you.
- 21 Mr Bramhall, just one very brief issue from me. So
- the strategy meeting that you had been asked about,
- 23 17 December, we know from the notes that FCAMHS, the
- 24 Forensic Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- 25 were not in attendance of that. Are you able to help us
 - 5
- 1 (The short adjournment)
- 2 (1.55 pm)

8

- DC PAULA MURPHY (sworn)
- 4 Questioned by MR GOSS
- 5 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Please have a seat, Ms Murphy.
- 6 Yes, Mr Goss?
- 7 MR GOSS: May it please you, sir. Could you give your full
 - name, please?
- 9 A. It is DC Paula Murphy.
- 10 Q. If we could have MERP007786, please. Is this a witness
- 11 statement you have made for the Inquiry?
- 12 A. It is, yes.
- 13 Q. If we could go to page 17. You have signed that on
- 14 4 August 2025?
- 15 **A.** Yes
- 16 Q. Are the contents of this statement true to the best of
- 17 your knowledge and belief?
- 18 **A.** Yes.
- 19 Q. Thank you.
- 20 DC Murphy, I think you joined the police as a Police
- 21 Constable in 2004?
- 22 A. Yes, that is correct.
- 23 Q. You became a Detective Constable in 2014?
- 24 A. Yes
- 25 Q. You are a PIP2 detective, can you tell us what that

- 1 means?
- 2 A. Professionalising the Investigation Programme.
- 3 Q. And the 2 is level 2 of that?
- 4 A. Level 2.
- 5 Q. When did you achieve that qualification?
- 6 **A.** 2014.
- 7 Q. Is that the course that effectively qualifies you as
- 8 a Detective Constable?
- 9 **A.** Yes.
- 10 Q. In December 2019, am I right you were stationed at Marsh
- 11 Lane Police Station?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. What was your role there?
- 14 A. A DC within level 2 investigations.
- 15 Q. You still work as a Detective Constable now?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. We are dealing today with your involvement in the
- 18 investigation of AR, following events at the Range High
- 19 School on 11 December 2019?
- 20 A. Yes
- 21 Q. Your first involvement in that case, I think, was about
- 22 lunchtime that day?
- 23 A. It was actually just after 4.30 in the afternoon.
- 24 Q. Thank you. Just dealing with what you were told about
- 25 the case at that point, you were told that AR had been
 - 6
- 1 Q. That pupil said that AR had struck him three times with
- 2 a hockey stick?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. He had visible red marks to his left arm and pain to the
- 5 fingers of his right hand?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. At any stage in your investigation, was there any
- 8 suggestion that this pupil had a broken arm?
- 9 **A.** No.
- 10 Q. I think you obtained medical records, so would have been
- in a position to know had that been the case?
- 12 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 13 Q. That pupil, the one who had been assaulted by AR, told
- 14 PC Clarke there was no reason for AR to attack him?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. PC Dodd then arrested AR for assault occasioning actual
- 17 bodily harm, for possession of a bladed article on
- 18 school property and for possession of an offensive
- 19 weapon, the hockey stick?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. AR was conveyed to custody and his detention authorised?
- 22 **A**. Yes.
- 23 Q. I think officers at the scene took a number of witness
- 24 statements from those involved?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 arrested at about 9.45 that morning by PC Dodd --
- 2 A. Yes

- 3 Q. -- who was another Merseyside officer, and that followed
 - PC Dodd and PC Clarke being allocated to respond to
- 5 a 999 call from the Range High School?
- 6 **A.** Yes
- 7 Q. That call reported an ex-student causing a disturbance?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. On arrival, they were met by the headteacher Mr McGarry.
- 10 Mr McGarry gave PC Dodd an account of AR using a hockey
- 11 stick to assault another pupil?
- 12 **A.** Yes.
- 13 Q. You describe that in paragraph 11 of PC Dodd's witness
- 14 statement. You don't need to bring it up, sir, but it
- 15 is MERP007527?
- 16 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you.
- 17 MR GOSS: PC Dodd was also told by AR that he had a knife in
- 18 his rucksack.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And he seized that knife as evidence and it was
- 21 a kitchen knife?
- 22 A. Yes, that is correct.
- 23 Q. PC Clarke took an initial account from the pupil who had
- 24 been attacked by AR?
- 25 **A.** Yes.

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- 1 Q. So those were available to you around 4.30 pm that
- 2 afternoon?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. I think that included statements from the headteacher,
- 5 the deputy headteacher, another teacher who had been
- 6 involved, the mother of the victim and also an officer
- 7 spoke to the mother of the intended victim as well?
- 8 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 9 Q. If we could go to MERP002919, the first page, please.
- 10 This is the effectively investigation log; is that
- 11 right?
- 12 **A.** Yes, that's correct.
- 13 Q. If we could look at the first entry. I'm just going to
- 14 ask you to help with some of the terminology. This
- 15 crime has been scored by Corvus IAM. Is "IAM" the
- 16 investigation allocation model?
- 17 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 18 Q. We can see that it scores 75, is that out of a total
- 19 score of 200?
- 20 A. Yes, I believe so.
- 21 Q. We can see the kind of factors that go into that scoring
- 22 system above. A score of 75/200 means it is suitable
 - for a level 2 investigation?
 - 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. Does that map across to your qualification as a PIP2

- 1 Investigator?
- 2 **A.** Yes.
- 3 Q. So what was your role then as the PIP2 Investigator on
- 4 this investigation?
- 5 A. Initially, it was to review the evidence and interview
- 6 AR later on that evening.
- 7 Q. I think before you could interview AR, there was
- 8 an email received from PC Harrison of Lancashire
- 9 Constabulary?
- 10 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 11 Q. If we can look at that, MERP002558. Sir, we have looked
- 12 at this this morning in a slightly different form. But
- 13 we can see that PC Harrison emails, I think it is
- 14 Sergeant Thompson?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Sergeant Tara Thompson, who was a Custody Officer in
- 17 Merseyside Police?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. If we can look at the top of that email, please, the
- details at the top, we can see that PS Thompson forwards
- 21 it to Detective Sergeant Chris Smith --
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. -- at about 4.42 that afternoon?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Who was Chris Smith?
- 65
- 1 investigation log and there are contact details for both
- 2 his current school and also for an officer within
- 3 Prevent, PC Thompson --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- not to be confused with the PS Thompson who works in
- 6 Merseyside custody.
- 7 Am I right that this new information prompted two
- 8 things: firstly, a decision to search AR's home address,
- 9 in particular for electronic devices?
- 10 A. Yes
- 11 Q. Secondly, an intention to get a statement from The
- 12 Acorns school --
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. -- covering AR's online activities?
- 15 **A.** Yes.
- 16 Q. I will come to the search in just a moment. But could
- 17 we go back to your witness statement, MERP007786 and
- page 10. At paragraph 33, you say:
- 19 "As I recall, this statement was never provided.
- 20 This was because the search history was no longer
- 21 available."
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Do you recall how you asked The Acorns about this?
- 24 A. Yes, I called them. I can't recall what date that
- 25 I made the phone call. I spoke to a teacher and she 67

- 1 A. It was my Detective Sergeant at the time.
- 2 Q. Looking at what the email reveals, it says that there
- 3 was a history of AR carrying knives into school. It
- 4 refers to the involvement of Lancashire Social Services.
- 5 Do you see the reference to Child & Family Wellbeing
- 6 Service?
- 7 **A.** Yes.
- 8 Q. It also sets out some details of internet use, logging
- 9 on to websites at school which involved school mass
- shootings and he wants to talk about guns and beheading
- 11 and seems to have a certain hatred of teachers, in
- 12 particular?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. You were told as well that there was Prevent
- 15 involvement, conducting background checks and obtaining
- 16 specific details?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. First of all, was this helpful information to receive
- 19 from your neighbouring police force?
- 20 A. Yes, definitely.
- 21 Q. Was it also concerning information to receive?
- 22 **A.** Yes
- 23 Q. If we could go back to the OEL, the occurrence enquiry
- 24 log, at MERP002919, and entry 2, we can see that
- 25 information from that email has been entered onto the
 - 6
- 1 told me IT had said that the data was no longer
- 2 available.
- 3 Q. There is some evidence available to the Inquiry that at
- 4 least some of AR's search history may, in fact, have
- 5 been available.
- 6 Sir, LCC001401 for your note, though no need to
- 7 bring it up for DC Murphy.
- 8 That was never drawn to your attention?
- 9 **A.** No.
- 10 Q. If that had been drawn to your attention and it revealed
- 11 any matters of concern, would that have been necessary
- 12 evidence for your investigation?
- 13 A. If it related to any searches regarding my
- 14 investigation, then it would have been beneficial. But
- anything additional would have been referred on.
- 16 Q. When you say "referred on", referred on to whom?
- 17 **A.** To Prevent, just to let them know what information was
- on the search history.
- 19 Q. Can I come back then to the search?
- 20 **A.** Yes.
- 21 Q. The information received from PC Harrison led to
- 22 a search of 10 Old School Close being directed formally
- 23 under Section 18 of PACE by an Inspector?
- 24 **A.** Hmm
- 25 Q. That search was carried out by Merseyside Police

- 1 officers, including, as it happens, PC Dodd and
- 2 PC Clarke?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. There were a number of devices seized from the address,
- 5 weren't there?
- 6 Α. Yes.
- 7 Q. I'm not going to ask you list them off the top of your
- 8 head. I think what was seized was a desktop tower,
- 9 a USB stick, an external hard drive, a HP laptop and
- 10 a PlayStation 4, all of which were seized by an officer
- 11 with the initial "CL" and so given CL/1, 2, 3, and so
- 12 on, exhibit numbers?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. There was a laptop also seized, HCS/1, and there were
- 15 two portable hard drives, IQ/1 and IQ/2; does that sound
- 16 right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- Q. As well as those devices from the home address, I think 18
- 19 AR's mobile phone, which was a black iPhone, was seized
- 20 from his possessions in custody as well?
- 21 A. Yes.
- Q. I think that became, I think, EO/1? 22
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Those devices were submitted for examination by
- Merseyside Police's Digital Forensics Unit? 25
- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. It was some time, I think, before you got the results of
- those searches. We will come back to it. 3
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. But just to complete the point, ultimately they came
- 6 back with nothing of relevance being found?
- 7 A. That's correct.
- 8 Q. Can I turn then to some other events while AR was in
- 9 custody on 11 December and, as I say, I will come back
- 10 to devices and what happened with them shortly.
- He was assessed in custody by Stephanie Hallaron of 11
- 12 the Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion team?
- 13 Α. Yes.
- 14 Q. What's their role?
- A. I'm not entirely sure, to be honest, I don't have any 15
- 16 involvement in that process.
- 17 Q. If I summarise it as they provide a mental health
- 18 presence within custody suites, does that match your
- understanding? 19
- 20 Α. Yes.
- 21 Q. I am sure there is more to it than that but as
- 22 an outline?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Could we have MERP002881 up, please. This is a note

25 that Ms Hallaron produced. Would you have seen this

- Yes. 1 A.
- 2 Q. I think the PlayStation was returned and not examined?
- Yes, that model didn't store any data, so it was 3 4
 - rejected.
- Q. I think one of the hard drives, CL/3 was attributed to 5
- 6 another family member and that also wasn't examined;
- 7 does that sound right?
- A. I can't recall that, sorry. 8
- 9 Q. But all of the other devices were examined by the
- 10 Forensics Unit?
- 11 A. Yes.

15

- 12 Q. I think we had disclosed to us this morning details of
- 13 that search, so it is not something that we can bring up
- 14 on the screen.
 - Sir, it will be disclosed in due course.
- 16 Have you seen that document?
- 17 A. I have, yes.
- 18 Is it right that the fact that AR had been searching for
- 19 school shootings and beheadings was flagged to the
- 20 Forensics Unit, as well as the details of the offence
- 21 for which he had been arrested?
- 22 A. That's correct, yes.
- 23 Q. They carried out searches on the devices for beheading
- 24 and for shooting, so mirroring the kind of searches that
- 25 AR was said to have been carrying out at school?
- 1 note at the time?
- 2 I don't recall seeing it on the 11th.
- 3 Q. Would you have seen it at some point in your
- 4 investigation?
- 5 A. Yes, I have seen it at some point but I can't recall
- 6

13

- 7 Q. I'm just picking some of the details from it. If we
- 8 could enlarge the large block of text towards the bottom
- of the page -- thank you -- it sets out what AR has said 9
- 10 to Ms Hallaron about the attack. It says:
- 11 "[AR] reports that he wouldn't have felt sad if he 12 hurt him."
 - "Him" being his intended victim:
- 14 "He reports not planning to use the knife but states
- 15 that he would have if the hockey stick did not work.
- 16 [He] states that he had wrapped tissue paper around the
- 17 handle to get a better grip. [AR] was asked if he was
- 18 planning on killing the student and he replied, 'I did
- 19 want to kill him but I don't think I would. Ideally,
- 20 I wish I did it. But they were in assembly so it 21 wouldn't have happened'. He is clear this was revenge."
- 22 Then in terms of why he assaulted his actual victim,
- 23 slightly further down that page:
- 24 "I asked if the male he had assaulted was involved 25 in the original bullying and [AR] stated he was not.

- 1 When asked why he had assaulted him, [AR] responded by
- 2 saying 'the headteacher and someone else was chasing me
- and I'm not going to get taken to the police station fornothing so I thought I would hit him'. [AR] reports
- 5 that he liked the student he hit and had never had any
- 6 problems with this boy."
- 7 Perhaps unsurprisingly, Ms Hallaron took the view
 - that AR had limited understanding of the consequences of
- 9 his actions?
- 10 A. Yes.

- 11 Q. She thought there was a lack of empathy and remorse and
- on page 3, in the "Risk assessment", she took the view
- that there was a medium risk of harm to others. Did
- 14 this assessment increase your concern over the risks
- 15 posed to others by AR?
- 16 A. I can't recall seeing it at the time, sorry.
- 17 Q. Just dealing with some other matters in custody.
- 18 I think a safeguarding referral was made about AR by
- 19 PC Dodd?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. That was then passed to Lancashire Constabulary who
- then, in turn, passed it to Lancashire MASH?
- 23 A. I believe so, yes.
- 24 Q. I think there were similar referrals for the intended
- 25 and actual victims?

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- 1 11th.
- 2 Q. Was that sort of wider context directly relevant to your
- 3 criminal investigation or was it more in the way of
- 4 helpful background?
- 5 A. I think it was just the wider safeguarding concerns.
- 6 Q. What was your role, as investigating officer, in
- 7 handling those wider safeguarding concerns?
- 8 A. I think it would be to do the necessary referrals.
- 9 Q. I think AR, there came a point where he was bailed
- 10 overnight on the 11th?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Essentially, it had become too late to interview him
- 13 because of the need for the searches to be carried out
- 14 and also bearing in mind his age?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. I think there were some checks carried out as to whether
- 17 he could return safely home and Lancashire Social
- 18 Services made clear that they were content with that?
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 $\,$ Q. He was released on bail conditions, which, if I can
- 21 summarise them: not to go within 400 metres of the Range

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- 22 High School; not to contact directly or indirectly
- 23 either his actual or his intended victims --
- 24 A. Yes
- 25 Q. -- and not to attend The Acorns Centre until it was

- 1 **A.** Yes.
- 2 Q. If we could have MERP002566, page 2. What we can see
- 3 here is contact between DS Smith and Sue Scotland in
- 4 Lancashire County Council's Emergency Duty Team?
- 5 A. Yes
- 6 Q. Is that a Social Services team?
- 7 **A.** Yes.
- 8 Q. If we go to the first page, please. We can see that
- 9 Ms Scotland put DS Smith in contact with Lucy Parkinson
- of the Early Help Team and then, in turn, that comes to
- 11 you the next day and you are put in touch. Lucy is the
- 12 key worker for AR?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. Then if we could look to page 15 of this, please. We
- 15 can see that, additionally, Ms Scotland shares
- 16 information with DS Smith about recent Social Services
- 17 involvement with AR and his family?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. What was the relevance of that to your criminal
- 20 investigation?
- 21 A. I can't recall. Do you mean on the 11th?
- 22 Q. Yes.
- 23 A. I can't recall seeing this email on the 11th. I would
- have been sort of dealing with preparing for the
- 25 interview and stuff. I can't recall seeing that on the

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- 1 approved by Social Services or, I suspect, the police?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Who was responsible for setting those as bail
- 4 conditions?
- 5 A. I think we would have all had some involvement, along
- 6 with supervision as well. I can't recall exactly.
- 7 Q. Are those bail conditions essentially designed, first of
- 8 all, to prevent further offending?
- 9 **A.** Yes.
- 10 Q. He has offended at the Range, so let's keep him away
- 11 from the Range. There is also an element of stopping
- him interfering with any investigation, by speaking to
- the actual or intended victim. Not attending The Acorns
- 14 Centre, do you recall what the thinking was about that?
- 15 $\,$ A. I think DS Smith had received a phone call to say that
- they didn't wish for him to attend until there had been
- a risk assessment completed, so we added that as
- an additional bail condition on the 12th.
- 19 Q. So that was down to the risk that they perceived of him20 committing further offences if he attended Acorns?
- 21 **A.** Yes
- 22 Q. He then returned to custody to answer his bail the
- 23 following day?
- 24 **A**. Yes
- 25 $\,$ **Q.** 12 December, now. I think he was accompanied by his

1		mother, Ms Muzayire?
2	A.	Yes.

Q. He was interviewed under caution --

4 Α. Yes.

5 **Q.** -- by you?

6 A. Yes.

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7 Q. I think he gave a prepared statement in response to 8 that. Could we have that MERP000186, page 17. He 9 alleged in that that he had been bullied by a named 10 individual at Range High School. He says he got to the 11 school and saw someone else and he admitted taking out 12 the hockey stick and striking that other person two or 13 three times. He said:

> "I have hit [the victim] because I couldn't see [the target]."

Filling in the names that we have redacted there.

He accepts he had a knife but says:

17 18

"... I didn't take it out and the teacher has mistaken my words when he says I told him I was there to kill [target] I just meant I was going to assault him because he used to bully me."

In terms of the admissions he has made there, is it fair to say that the evidence for those points was overwhelming?

25 Α. Yes.

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1 recall which questions now but he was challenged as to 2 why he was laughing. It was just inappropriate. 3 Q. Did you get a sense of how his mother was responding to

4 these serious allegations that you were trying to

5 explore with him?

6 A. She didn't challenge him at all. I do remember thinking 7 at the time, I just thought that was a bit strange.

I think I would challenge if it was my son or daughter

9 behaving that way.

Q. After the interview, I think AR was released again on 10 bail --11

12 Α.

Q. -- with the same conditions? 13

14 A. Yes.

Q. Then if we could look at MERP002566 and page 18, 15 16 DS Smith then sends out an update to all agencies who

have expressed an interest in what is going on with AR.

18 You can see, for example, that goes to Ms Parkinson of

19 Child & Family Wellbeing Service, to Officer B in CTP,

20 to PC Harrison in Lancashire Constabulary, as well as to

21 you as the Investigating Officer?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. If we could look at page 4 of this, please. Slightly

24 earlier that afternoon, this is the request from

25 Officer B to be kept informed. He says: 79

Q. The last sentence isn't a denial that he said he was

there to kill his target but it is an attempt to

3 downplay what it means, isn't it?

4 A. Yes.

1 2

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Q. It is not consistent with what AR had said to 5

6 Ms Hallaron, "I did want to kill him but I don't think

7 I would, ideally I wish I did it", is it?

> Quite understandably you had rather more questions for him than that. Could we look at MERP002882 on page 8, please. This, I think, is part of the submission that you ultimately provided to the Crown

11

12 Prosecution Service?

13 A. Yes.

14 **Q.** But it is a list of the questions that you asked AR.

I'm not going to go through all of them. But you 15

16 explored what he said about using the knife. You

17 explored his internet usage, and I think he gave a no

18 comment -- and of course the attack itself -- and he

19 gave a "no comment" interview throughout.

20 A. Yes, that is correct.

21 **Q.** Were there any moments when he behaved inappropriately

22 in that interview?

23 A. Yes, a number of times.

24 Q. In what way?

25 A. Just kept laughing at some of the questions. I can't

1 "Thank you for the update in relation to [AR] ..." 2

It is an earlier update: "... I have picked the job up as this came as a Prevent referral for our assessment, this has been sent ... for their checks, please can you update me with the outcome, and pass my details to the OIC in relation to the computer/mobile seizures."

It appears that CTP are aware that devices have been seized and they have expressed an interest in the outcome of those searches?

11 A Yes

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12 Q. Could we look, please, to your witness statement -- in fact can we look at MERP002919 on page 6, entry 25. 13

14 Could we have entry 25 just enlarged, please? Thank 15

16 This is an entry that you made on the investigation 17 log on 16 December, where you record contact with the 18 victim's mother?

19 A. Yes.

21

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20 Q. She tells you about:

> "... talk at school stating that [AR] had a 'list' which contained the names of 3 children he wished to target, the names being [two named pupils at the school] and an unknown female."

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. You have explained that:
- 2 "... no such list has been brought to my attention.
- 3 She states that [another pupil's] mum is very concerned
- 4 about this information."
- 5 Would that have been a telephone call that you --
- 6 A. It was a telephone call, yes.
- 7 Q. Were you ever provided with a copy of such a list?
- 8 **A.** No
- 9 Q. Had anything been found on AR when he was arrested?
- 10 A. No.
- 11 Q. Anything found in the search of the home address?
- 12 **A.** No.
- 13 Q. As far as you were concerned, was this ever anything
- 14 more than local rumour?
- 15 **A.** No.
- 16 Q. If there had been any evidence of this, it would have
- 17 been relevant to your investigation, wouldn't it?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 $\,$ Q. It would have been something of concern in terms of the
- 20 risk that AR posed to others?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. After the attack in July 2024, there were some
- 23 suggestions that it was AR's mother who had mentioned
- a hit list when she attended his interview under
- 25 caution; are you aware of that?
 - 31
- 1 **A.** No.
- 2 Q. Did you have any role in deciding who else was to be
- 3 invited?
- 4 A. No.
- 5 Q. What sort of steps did you take to prepare to attend
- 6 this meeting?
- 7 A. I felt I was pretty prepared because I had only just
- 8 dealt with AR a couple of days before.
- 9 Q. If we could have LANC000004 up, please. DC Murphy,
- 10 these are the minutes of this meeting. I think you have
- 11 reviewed these in preparing for today?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. But you didn't receive these at the time?
- 14 **A.** No.
- 15 Q. If we go to page 2, please, we can see who else was
- there. From policing, we have Sergeant Bramhall and
- 17 PC Harrison from the Community Safety Team in the
- 18 Lancashire Constabulary, and we also have Carmen
- 19 Thompson, it says there Early Action Team but, in fact,
- she was from Prevent, wasn't she?
- 21 A. Yes, I believe so. Yes.
- 22 $\,$ Q. $\,$ We can also see that we have Stephanie Hallaron, the
- 23 mental health practitioner who had seen AR in custody,
- 24 whose note we have looked at?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 A. Yes, I have been made aware of it since the
- 2 investigation.
- 3 Q. Did that happen?
- 4 **A.** No.
- 5 MR GOSS: Sir, I wonder if now is a convenient moment for
- 6 just a five-minute break?
- 7 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Certainly. I will rise for five
- 8 minutes.
- 9 (2.30 pm)
- 10 (A short break)
- 11 (2.35 pm)
- 12 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Yes, Mr Goss.
- 13 MR GOSS: Thank you, sir. You were invited to a strategy
- meeting about AR for 17th December 2019.
- 15 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 16 Q. I think you can't recall how you came to be invited --
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. -- and the invitation that we have seen previously --
- 19 sir, LANC000054 -- doesn't seem to have gone to you
- 20 directly but somebody at some point must have made you
- 21 aware that this meeting was taking place and invited you
- 22 to attend?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. Was it regular for you to be invited to these sorts of
- 25 meetings?

- 1 Q. Did her presence there reassure you that there was
- 2 someone with a foot in both the mental health and the
- 3 criminal justice worlds present?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. What was your role at the meeting?
- 6 A. Just to give an update on the investigation and what had
- 7 taken place and, obviously, the bail conditions.
- 8 Q. If we could look to page 3, please, bottom of page 3, we
- 9 can see the update that you have given there:
- 10 "... advised that [he] has been arrested and bailed
- 11 ..."
- 12 You set out the bail conditions, you set out the
- 13 prepared statement -- if we go over to the top of
- page 4 -- and the "no comment" interview. You say there
- 15 he denied researching violent acts on the internet.
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 Q. Do you recall that now?
- 18 **A.** Yes.
- 19 Q. So it wasn't a wholly "no comment" interview, there was,
- in fact, one point he denied?
- 21 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 22 Q. You set out your concerns about inappropriate behaviour
- 23 in the interview and the fact that there wasn't any
- 24 challenge from his mother, and you have told us about
- 25 those?

- 1 Α. Yes.
- 2 Q. But you shared those with that meeting?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. You told the meeting about the search of his house and
- 5 the devices, bail conditions and you set a timeframe for
- 6 the analysis of the devices, about three months?
- 7 Α. Yes
- 8 Q. Was that a normal sort of timeframe for device review?
- 9 Yes. A.
- 10 Q. Then you also set out what has been found out from the
- intended target, that he knows of AR but has never had 11
- 12 any issues with him and also the fact that AR had
- 13 contacted his intended target's sister the day before --
- 14 A.

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- Q. -- and called her something nasty via Instagram. 15
- 16 There's then updates from the various other agencies,
- 17 including Ms Hallaron. The one I want to look at is
- from PC Thompson. It is on page 6. 18

Bottom of the page, bottom two paragraphs, if they could be enlarged, please. Thank you:

"Carmen Thompson from Prevent identified that she will be completing an assessment regarding [AR] and considering if a referral to Channel programme would be appropriate for him."

What did you understand the role of Prevent to be at

- 1 With regards to other people?
- 2 Q. Yes.
- 3 A. Sorry, can you ask the question again?
- 4 Q. Yes. You said that the risk he posed to others was
- 5 concerning. What was in place to address those
- 6 concerns?
- 7 We had the bail conditions. We had spoken to the
 - victims as well, who informed us they didn't believe AR
- 9 knew where they lived because, if he did, then we would
- 10 have put "Treat as Urgent" markers on their home
- addressed and stuff, so it was just looking over the 11
- 12 victims
- 13 Q. What about the wider risk to non-identified victims, was
- 14 that your role to think about or was that for some of
- 15 these other agencies --
- A. I don't recall thinking about that at the time. 16
- 17 Q. I have been asked to explore whether you think you had
- 18 too much of a focus on the criminal investigation and
- not enough on the wider management of risk. What would 19
- 20 you say to that?
- A. I'd disagree with that. 21
- 22 Q. Can we look very briefly at a different note of this
- 23 meeting. It is one by PC Thompson. CTPNW000132.
- 24 If we could look at the second page of that, please.
- 25 The same meeting, DC Murphy, different person making 87

- this stage? 1
- 2 A. I can't recall, I'm not sure.
- 3 Q. If we could look at the bottom of page 6, please --4
 - sorry, it was that bit that we had already:
- "It was agreed that there is a risk of re-offending 5 6 from [AR]."
- 7 Did you agree with that?
- 8 A. Definitely had the potential to re-offend, yes.
- 9 If we can go over the page to the top of page 7, the
- 10 plan is essentially to reconvene in January following
- 11 further enquiries by Prevent, by Children's Social Care
- 12 and by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and,
- 13 of course, for your investigation to continue its
- 14 course?
- A. Yes. 15
- 16 Q. Apart from the fact that you had bail conditions on AR,
- 17 did you think that you, or Merseyside Police generally,
- 18 had a role in managing the risk AR posed to others?
 - 19 No, not at that point. I think just managing the bail.
- 20 Q. Given the information that was shared at that meeting
- 21 and that you had become aware of through your
- 22 investigation, how concerned were you about that risk to
- 23 others?
- 24 Α. It was concerning.
- 25 Q. What was there in place to address that concern?

- 1 a note, and it is in some respects a slightly fuller
- 2 note.
- 3 At the top of the page, we can see that you have
- 4 passed on to the meeting what the victim's mother had
- 5 said about the list of targets?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Again, you have clearly said it was the victim's mother
- 8 who said that?
- 9 A. Yes.
- Q. We can also see that you seem to have passed on what AR 10
- had said to Liam, a PC from Merseyside, can we take it 11
- 12 that that must have been PC Dodd?
- 13 A. I can't recall saying that but, yes, it would have been
- 14 PC Dodd
- 15 Q. "... that he [that's AR] had taken the hockey stick to
- hit the victim with and that he was going to use the 16
- 17 knife to finish him off and that he was not bothered
- about the prison sentence." 18
- 19 You say you can't remember saying that. Do you 20 remember being aware of that?
- 21 A.
- 22 Q. Obviously, that's in stark contrast to what AR had
- 23 admitted in his prepared statement, saying he had no
- 24 intention to use the knife and no intention to kill.
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. I think you were invited to the follow-up strategy
- 2 meeting on 6 January 2020, at MERP002571 please, bottom
- 3 of page 1.
- 4 So at the bottom of the page is the invitation to
- 5 you to attend the next meeting?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Then, at the top of the page, you flag, I think, to
- 8 DS Smith and DS McDermott that you are on annual leave
- 9 that day?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. I think it was arranged that DS Haffenden -- is that the
- 12 same as DS McDermott?
- 13 **A.** It is, yes.
- 14 **Q.** Would attend instead?
- 15 A. That is correct.
- 16 Q. Did you do any hand over to DS Haffenden?
- 17 A. I can't recall but she did have quite a lot of
- 18 involvement, her and DS Smith, at the beginning, so she
- 19 would have known a lot of the detail regarding the
- 20 investigation.
- 21 Q. I think she did attend that meeting and there were no
- 22 actions for Merseyside Police --
- 23 A. That is correct, yes.
- 24 Q. -- coming out of it. Could we look at CTPNW000009,
- please. Again, this is a note of that meeting by
 - 89
- 1 Q. So, it might be that at this point you were still hoping
- 2 to get it?
- 3 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 4 Q. It might be that DS Haffenden has not been updated that
- 5 it isn't available?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Or it might be a misunderstanding or miscommunication
- 8 that you have tried to get it and you haven't been able
- 9 to?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Could we look at LCC001462, please. This is
- 12 an invitation to the third multi-agency meeting that was
- due to take place on 4 March. It wasn't sent to you?
- 14 **A.** No
- 15 Q. I think the only Merseyside address it was sent to is to
- 16 an officer who works in a wholly different team?
- 17 A. That's correct.
- 18 Q. You say in your statement at paragraph 37 that it might
- 19 be that this is a mistranscription of DS Haffenden's
- 20 email address but you can't say for sure?
- 21 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 22 Q. But the effect of this is that nobody from MerPol went
- to the meeting on 4 March 2020?
- 24 A. Yes, correct.
- 25 $\,$ Q. Your investigation though continued. I think, various

- 1 counter-terrorism police and, looking at the update at 2 the bottom paragraph:
- 3 "The investigation in relation to the recent assault
- 4 is still ongoing with Merseyside Police and awaiting
- 5 a CPS decision. The devices are being examined, the
- 6 school internet history is also being looked at by
- Merseyside Police, they will update accordingly with anyconcerns found."
- 9 We will come to the devices and we know that there
- were no concerns found on those. Do you think that canbe right about the school internet history?
- 12 A. If what, sorry?
- 13 Q. Do you think that can be right about the school internet
- 14 history?
- 15 A. I don't know what you mean, sorry.
- 16 Q. It says:
- 17 "... the school internet history is also being
- 18 looked at by Merseyside Police ..."
- 19 A. Yes -- no, that wasn't correct. It was my -- an action
- 20 from me was to call the school and obtain that internet
- 21 history but that makes it sound like I have got it and
- 22 I didn't have it.
- 23 Q. Do you know whether you had been told by this point that
- 24 it wasn't available?
- 25 A. January, I'm not sure to be honest.

- 1 steps: you obtained medical records for the victim as we
- 2 touched on already?
- 3 **A**. Yes
- 4 Q. You took steps to obtain further CCTV and to convey that
- 5 to the CPS?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. That, I think, required some back and forth between the
- 8 school and the Visual Evidence Unit?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. In due course, you obtained a charging decision from the
- 11 CPS for AR on 28 January?
- 12 **A.** Yes.
- 13 Q. Could we go back, please, to MERP002882, and page 2,
- 14 please. Is this effectively the documentation that you
- provide to the CPS requesting a decision on charge?
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 Q. This text on this screen, I think probably not filled
- out by you but by an evidential gatekeeper of some sort;
- 19 is that fair?
- 20 A. Yes, a police decision-maker.
- 21 Q. So they quality assure the case and make sure it is fit
- for the CPS before it goes off to them?
- 23 A. Correct, yes.
- 24 Q. So looking at the section marked "Case analysis", in the
- 25 middle of the page, it identifies:

1 "In October 2019 suspect [AR] was permanently 2 excluded as he attended school with a knife and 3 expressed his intention to use it."

It then says:

"This matter was not reported to police."

We have heard it was reported to Lancashire Constabulary. That's either an error or you hadn't been made aware of that?

9 A. I don't think we had been made aware of it. It hadn't 10 been reported to Merseyside Police, I think, maybe

that's what it's referring to. 11

We should perhaps read "Merseyside Police" in there? 12 **Q**.

13 A. Yes.

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Q. But the fact he had attended school in 2019 was 14 15 obviously known to you, not least from the strategy 16 meeting that you attended --

17 Α.

18 Q. -- and, likewise, the intention that he had expressed to 19 use it?

20 Α. Yes.

21 Q. That was part of the material that was then provided to

the Crown Prosecution Service? 22

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. The CPS then approved the charges that had been 25 requested?

93

- 1 A. I don't know off the top of my head, sorry.
- 2 Q. If it helps, you say a little bit about it at
- 3 paragraph 54 of your witness statement, on page 14.
- 4 A. So it is issued to young offenders typically between 10
- 5 and 17 who have pleaded guilty to a first time offence.
- 6 It's a way of addressing their offending behaviour to
- 7 prevent future criminal activity, through a contract 8
 - with a referral order panel. They typically last
- 9 between 3 and 12 months.
- Q. Thank you. We will hear more about them from others. 10
- A. Okay. 11
- Q. By the point of his charge and indeed his conviction, 12
- you hadn't got the results of those electronic device 13
- 14 searches had you?
- 15 A. No.
- Q. Were those results not potentially important for your 16
- 17 investigation?
- Potentially, but I think we were keen to sort of get it 18 Α.
- to CPS and get a charge. 19
- 20 Q. So they might be helpful but they weren't necessary?
- A. Yes, I think we did have all the necessary evidence we 21
- 22 needed to get him charged.
- 23 Q. I think if we can look at the next entry in here, entry
- 24 66 on the same page. It was 4 March that you are
- 25 updated that six of the devices that you have submitted 95

Yes. 1 Α.

Q. When AR answered bail on 2 February, he was duly charged 2

with assault occasioning actual bodily harm, possession 3

4 of a bladed article and possession of an offensive

5 weapon. In the charge documents, I think the offensive

6 weapon is referred to as a "baseball bat"?

7 A. That's correct, yes.

8 Q. That seems to have been an error that's crept in

9 somewhere along the line because that was the hockey

10 stick, wasn't it?

A. Yes, can I just say it was 4 February, I think, when he 11

came for charge. 12

13 Q. Thank you. If we could go back to MERP002919, page 10,

14 entry 64 and 65. We can see that you update PC Harrison

15 from Lancashire Constabulary and also Anna Jameson in

16 Lancashire Children's Social Care.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. In due course, AR pleaded guilty to all three offences

19 on his first appearance at the youth court. I'm going

20 to say 19 February but you may know better than me?

21 A. Yes, that's right.

He had a referral order imposed for ten months? 22 Q.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Can you help us just in outline with your understanding

25 of a referral order?

94

1 are negative for data relating to the investigation --

2 A.

Q. -- and that's all the devices you had submitted bar one, 3

which was the iPhone? 4

5 A. Yes.

Q. We can see in entry 67 EO/01, that's the iPhone: 6

7 "... currently subject to PIN decryption ... 68 8

years ... left in current strategy."

9 Perhaps, unsurprisingly, a decision was taken that 10 that wasn't proportionate?

A. Yes, correct. 11

12 Q. So, ultimately, the iPhone was never decrypted and its

13 contents never accessed?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you think about providing AR with a notice under

16 section 49 of RIPA to compel him to decrypt the device?

17 A. I didn't consider it at the time but I should have

18 considered it.

19 Q. Would that have been a typical step to take in this sort

20 of investigation?

A. To issue an advisory notice, I don't know whether it 21

22 would have met the threshold for a Section 49 notice

23 but, regardless, I still should have considered it.

24 Q. In other words, you could perhaps have pushed him

a little bit harder? 25

96

(24) Pages 93 - 96

Yes
Δ

- 2 Q. But it might not have met the threshold to actually
- 3 compel him and, effectively, make him subject to
- 4 criminal sanction for not providing the decryption?
- 5 Α.
- 6 Q. As we have touched on, the devices obviously weren't
- 7 just being examined for your examination but also
- 8 because of the information that was of interest to
- 9 Prevent. After the end of a criminal investigation, is
- 10 there a power for the police to keep hold of and further
- 11 interrogate devices?
- A. 12
- 13 Q. I think any data that was downloaded from the devices
- wasn't retained beyond March 2020 by the forensics unit? 14
- 15 Α. Yes.
- 16 Q. The devices themselves were -- after a little bit of
- 17 back and forth over the logistics and bearing in mind
- 18 this was now at the early stages of the pandemic, the
- 19 devices were returned to AR's family by mid-May 2020?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Did you ever update Prevent or CTP about the fact that
- 22 the devices mostly had come back negative but you hadn't
- 23 been able to access one?
- 24 A. I didn't.
- 25 **Q.** I appreciate it was a nothing interesting response,

- 1 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much for your evidence
- DC Murphy, you are now free to go. 2
- 3 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.
- 4 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: I am in your hands, Mr Goss.
- 5 MR GOSS: I think if I could ask you just to rise for five
- 6 minutes and Mr Moss is taking the next witness.
- 7 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: In fact, we will be slightly more
- 8 merciful, 10 minutes. I will sit again at 3.10 pm.
- 9 (3.00 pm)
- 10 (A short break)
- (3.10 pm) 11

13

- PC DAVID FAIRCLOUGH (affirmed)
- **Questioned by MR MOSS**
- 14 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Thank you very much. Have a seat.
- Yes, Mr Moss? 15
- MR MOSS: Thank you, sir. 16
- 17 Just start by giving us your full name, if you
- 18 would?
- A. David Fairclough. 19
- 20 Q. Thank you. If we could have on screen, please,
- 21 LANC000273. We see PC Fairclough that this is the
- 22 helpful and detailed statement that you provided to this
- 23 Inquiry on 7 August, I think, this year; is that right?
- 24 Α.
- 25 Q. Is that statement true to the best of your knowledge and 99

- 1 would it have been good practice to let CTP know you had
- 2 an interest in this, "We have taken it as far as we can,
- 3 there's nothing further for you"?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Lastly from me, DC Murphy, from your perspective, after
- 6 AR's behaviour -- violent behaviour -- on 11 December
- 7 was reported to Merseyside, which agency was responsible
- 8 for assessing and addressing the risk he posed to
- 9 others?
- 10 A. I think we all had a responsibility in addressing it.
- 11 I don't think any one agency had a -- the overall
- control of it. 12
- 13 Q. Within policing, who was it who was responsible for
- 14 managing that risk?
- 15 A. I'm not sure.
- 16 MR GOSS: I'm just looking to my left. I think those are
- 17 all the questions, sir, unless you have any for
- DC Murphy? 18

19

Questioned by THE CHAIR

- 20 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: If you were all responsible for
- 21 assessing the risk and no one in particular was
- 22 responsible for assessing the risk, isn't there a danger
- 23 that nothing really gets assessed at all and nobody
- 24 takes responsibility?
- 25 A. There is a danger of that, yes.

- 1 belief?
- 2 It is. Δ
- 3 You will be aware that you gave two previous
- 4 statements -- police statements. Could we have the
- 5 first of them, please, LANC000019. Can you just confirm
- 6 that that's the first police statement that you provided
- 7 on I think it was 23 August 2024?
- 8 A. It is.
- Q. You will be well familiar with the declaration and you 9
- are giving a declaration that you understood that the 10
- 11 contents were true to the best of your knowledge and
- 12 belief for that statement, also?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Thank you. Then could we have also, please, LANC000023.
- 15 You provided a further statement for police purposes on
- 16 28 November 2024, I think, with a similar declaration?
- 17 A. Yes
- Q. Thank you. I want to just get you to explain a little 18
- 19 bit about your background. Is it right, PC Fairclough,
- 20 that you joined Lancashire Constabulary originally, was
- 21 it, as a Police Community Support Officer?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Was that back in January 2018?
- 24 A.
- 25 Q. Just so we have a feel for it, I think you left school

- 1 as a 16 year old. I think you did two stints with
- 2 Tesco, one stint with Amazon?
- 3 **A.** Yes.
- 4 Q. During the course of that part of your career, I think
- 5 you studied for a degree in sport and exercise science
- 6 at Edge Hill University?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. As a result of that, is it right that you were able,
- 9 when you wanted to apply to be a Police Constable, you
- 10 were able to join under the Degree Holder Entry
- 11 Programme?
- 12 A. That's correct, yes.
- 13 Q. I think part of the first cohort in Lancashire going
- 14 through that method of --
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Thank you.
- 17 So, you joined initially as a PCSO and was it in
- 18 March 2020 that you applied to become a police officer?
- 19 A. I became a police officer in March 2020.
- 20 Q. You became a police officer?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. You would have had a two-year probationary period?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. That would have come to an end, is this right, at the
- very end of March 2022?

- 1 to comment but do you think that the limitations on your
- 2 training had any impact once you were out on the ground
- 3 as a probationary officer?
- 4 A. I would say on confidence levels, maybe. I have the
- 5 benefit of being able to compare it to my PCSO training,
- 6 which was done in person at Headquarters.
- 7 Q. So confidence, principally?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Did it have any impact on the extent of your knowledge?
- 10 We are exploring in this Inquiry whether referrals were
- 11 made, or should have been made, or repeat referrals
- 12 should have been made to the Community Safety Team, to
- 13 the Early Action Team and to the Violence Reduction
- 14 Network. In March 2022 were you aware of those?
- 15 A. I had heard of the Early Action Team. I had never heard
- 16 of the Violence Reduction Team, and what was the third
- 17 one, sorry?
- 18 Q. The Community Safety Team?
- 19 A. Yes, never heard of them.
- 20 Q. You've not heard of them?
- 21 **A.** No.
- 22 **Q.** Why do you think that was?
- 23 A. I think, as an Immediate Response Officer, the training
- you are given is very specific to answering 999 calls,
- et cetera, not for bigger term, long-term safeguarding.

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A. Yes.

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- 2 Q. So I'm going to ask you questions, as you will know,
- 3 about an incident in the middle of March. You were
- 4 coming right towards the end of your two-year
- 5 probationary period; is that fair?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. Thank you.
- 8 During the course of your training, you also
- 9 completed the diploma in policing; is that right?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. You have set out, we don't perhaps need to have it open,
- in your statement -- sir, for your note, paragraphs 117
- 13 to 121 -- that there were some limitations on the
- 14 training you received simply due to the Covid pandemic?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Just tell us in outline what the limitations were?
- 17 A. The majority of our training was done via Microsoft
- 18 Teams and this was done at our home address. The only
- 19 exceptions that I can remember were our officer safety
- training and our first aid. That was done in person in
- 21 small groups at Force Headquarters.
- 22 Q. It is inevitable, particularly as a probationary
- 23 officer, that you would have come across, not just this
- but a number of incidents, I am sure, that were
- 25 unexpected or unusual for you. It may be hard for you 102
 - Q. Again, it may be difficult for you to answer this but do
- 2 you think that that was something you had been told
- 3 about and had missed or do you think that you may not
- 4 have been the only one of your cohort and your
- 5 experience who didn't know about those things?
- 6 A. I certainly can't recall hearing about them things.
- 7 $\,$ Q. On any view, PC Fairclough, when I'm going to ask you
- 8 detailed questions about what happened with the incident
- 9 with AR in relation to March, it is very difficult to
- 10 avoid using hindsight --
- 11 A. Yes.

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- 12 Q. -- knowing what we now do about AR. Try not to use
- 13 hindsight. Just dealing with your training, you
- 14 mentioned confidence: do you think that the restrictions
- on your training had any effect on your ability to make
- 16 judgement calls?
- 17 A. I didn't know about the referrals I could have made,
- that you just mentioned. But other than that, no.
- 19 Q. Thank you.
- 20 You have mentioned training as a Response Officer
- 21 and I think working as a Response Officer was the role
- that you were involved in, in March 2022; is that right?
 - 23 A. Correct, yes.
 - Q. Thank you. Are you still with Lancashire Constabularynow?

IOW :

- 1 A. I am, yes.
- 2 Q. What role do you do now?
- 3 A. I'm a Neighbourhood Officer now.
- 4 Q. Thank you.
- 5 I want to go on then to look at the 17 March
- 6 incident, and can we start with how you were allocated
- 7 to that. You were in a marked police car, I think, that
- 8
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Were you single crewed or were you crewed with somebody
- 11
- A. I was single crewed. 12
- 13 Q. You tell us in your statement, paragraph 7 onwards, on
- 14 page 2, that at about 11.44, is this right, that you
- 15 were allocated to the report of a missing child in
- 16 Banks?
- 17 A. I think I actually had seen the incident on my police
- Samsung, so I shouted up and volunteered to attend. 18
- 19 Q. Thank you. You tell us that the incident was given
- 20 a grade 2. What did that mean in practice? What was
- 21 the target attendance time?
- 22 Α. So within one hour. It means there's some risk but it
- 23 doesn't warrant a 999 call.
- 24 Q. Is the requirement to seek to attend within one hour?
- 25 Α.

- 1 It looks like the controller says:
- 2 "No, er good shout, I will do that now."
- 3 So I don't think that's you but that's an early
 - indication of this being passed to Merseyside as well
- 5 because of how close to the police force boundary Banks
- 6 in Lancashire is.
- 7 A. Yes.

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- 8 Q. Thank you.
- 9 Once you were assigned to this, did you understand
- that the report had been made by AR's mother? 10
- A. I knew it was a parent. I can't recall which. 11
- Q. Thank you. You attended the home address in response to 12
- 13 this call?
- 14 A. Yes
- Q. Just help us, before we get to the detail in AR's case 15
- 16 and the interaction you had with AR's parents: what's
- 17 the standard practice and what's the purpose of visiting
- 18 the home address? It may seem obvious to you but can
- 19 you just explain what the standard practice would be,
- 20 why you are visiting the home?
- 21 A. Yes, it is to collect any key details that we may need.
- 22 It will help us assess the risk of the person who has
- 23 gone missing. We have different risk grades and it also
- 24 allows us to do a search of the home address and look
- 25 for any indications that have been made in preparation

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- Q. Thank you. In paragraph 7 -- if we can just enlarge 1
 - that, please -- helpfully, you have set out, so we don't
- 3 need to turn them out -- but, sir, for your note, the
 - transcript can be found at LANC000419 -- you have set
- out the radio calls at this stage, and we see: 5
- 6 "Would you be good enough to look at grade 2 MFH
- 7

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- Missing from home?
- 9 A. Yes, that was actually a shouted out for a colleague,
- 10 I was using the call sign, SBCAR9, and the call operator
- 11 asked SB48 --
- Q. A little bit slower. 12
- 13 A. Sorry, I was using SBCAR9. For reasons unknown to
- 14 myself, the operator has then asked SB48 if they could
- 15 attend and they have informed the control room that
- 16 I was already dealing with that incident.
- 17 Q. I was going to come onto this but, when we see,
- I believe Car 9 is going to have a look at that", that, 18
- 19 I think, is you, Car 9?
- 20 A. I'm a Car 9, yes.
- 21 Q. We don't need the full details of your call sign but
- Car 9 will do for our purposes. There's also a 22
- 23 reference:
- 24 "Has it been passed to Merseyside as well in case
- 25 he's walked in that direction?"

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- 1 for the missing from home leaving.
- 2 Q. You are looking among other things for any signs of
- 3 preparation and presumably any clues as to where they
- 4 may have gone?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Now, when you got to the home, was it first to AR's
- 7 mother that you were speaking?
- 8 A. I believe it was.
- 9 Q. Thank you. You have made some entries about that in
- 10 your police notebook, and two, I think, of the earlier
- ones. Can we look at the first one. It is LANC000027. 11
- 12 So, AR, his date of birth, important of course to
- 13 get a physical description of what they are wearing for
- 14 very obvious reasons with a missing person?
- 15
- A. Yes.
- Q. But then you start to get into some background. So 16
- 17 early on you have got "Range High School -- expelled",
- 18
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. "Going to Acorns", and then "January 2022 the Range High
- 21 School". Can you help in relation to what you think all
- 22 of that referred to?
- 23 A. The Range High School was an account that I was given by
- 24 mother about a previous incident that had happened
- 25 there. The Acorns was a school in Ormskirk that he was

- 1 in the process of leaving and starting a new school and
- 2 I believe the January 2022 incident -- I can't recall
- 3 fully what that means: the January 2022, the Range High
- 4 School.
- 5 Q. Thank you. We know in fact that the incidents at the
- Range High School had been earlier than that but perhaps

7 we will come onto that.

- Then if we look at the next entry, LANC000028, again your pocket notebook entry:
- 10 "No friends. No family."
- Does the no family there refer to no extended family that he would have gone to?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. "Sertraline.
- 15 "Autism, ADHA."
- 16 Is what it says. Presumably that is all short note
- 17 form of information that you are getting from AR's
- 18 mother?
- 19 A. Yes, so at that point, I would have been building up my
- 20 risk assessments and that's what I have noted down at
- 21 the time, yes.
- 22 Q. And "Small knife", you deal with it in your statement
- 23 but just tell us how that came up?
- 24 $\,$ A. So the mother disclosed -- I can't recall whether I had
- 25 already seen it on the incident log but I do remember
- 1 to generate this report?
- 2 A. It's a Samsung mobile phone but it has equipment on that
- 3 we would use as police officers. We call it "Pronto".
- 4 Q. Thank you. We can see again the physical description
- 5 that you have mentioned there. You have recorded
- 6 information about AR's neurodiversity and his needs; is
- 7 that right?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Again, the source of that, presumably AR's mother?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. You have recorded information that AR was meant to be
- 12 starting a new school, that he was meant to be meeting
- his new teachers and have a tour of the school today.
- 14 He has gone missing before this meeting. Again, leaving
- 15 hindsight to one side, what was your assessment of the
- 16 significance of that information at the time?
- 17 A. His mother had told me he did not like change. He was
- 18 due to meet -- I believe it was two new teachers that
- 19 day. I thought at that time he has possibly just left
- 20 the house in a bit of fear to get away for a couple of
- 21 hours.
- 22 $\,$ Q. So to you, at the time, would it appear that there would
- 23 have been a situational aspect of significance, in other
- 24 words, something was meant to be happening that day that
- AR may have found difficult that may have explained him,

- 1 the mother recalling that she believed he had a small
- 2 knife in his possession that was missing from the
- 3 kitchen that morning.
- 4 Q. Thank you. We will perhaps come back to the sequencing5 of how that information arose.
- 6 Now, another document that you have is LANC000082.
- 7 Can we have that on the screen, please? We see at the
- 8 top that this is a primary offence, "MFH -- Other
- 9 Missing Child". Would this be known generally as
- 10 a missing from home report?
- 11 A. It would.
- 12 Q. We can see under "Investigation summary":
- 13 "**FOUND**."
- 14 So clearly that would have been written later in the
- 15 day. When would you first have started entering this
- 16 information?
- 17 A. So I believe I would have started it at the home address
- and that's why I have got so many pocket notebook
- 19 entries. So whenever you leave the screen that you are
- 20 writing your entries on, when you come back into it, it
- 21 will start a new pocket notebook entry, hence why I have
- got so many, and I would have updated this as and when
- the information was given to me.
- 24 Q. Thank you. So, just help us to understand the
- 25 realities. What physically -- what device are you using 110
- 1 on the face of it, running away?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. You see the sertraline medication referred to as well
- 4 and not liking crowded places; is that right?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Then, if we can just leave this on screen for a moment,
- 7 but you say in paragraph 15 of your statement that you
- 8 had read on the incident log that AR had previously
- 9 attended his old high school with a knife and attacked
- 10 another student; is that right?
- 11 **A.** Yes.
- 12 Q. You say in your statement that AR's mother stated he had
- done this because he believed he was being bullied; is
- 14 that right?
- 15 **A.** Yes.
- 16 Q. It was at that stage, you go on in your statement to
- 17 say, AR's mother then disclosed that AR may be in
- possession of a knife, as she had noticed one missing
- 19 from her kitchen?
- 20 **A.** Yes.
- 21 Q. So the sequence, at least according to your statement to
- the Inquiry, is you have established from the log the
- 23 information about a previous attack; mother has then
- 24 given some explanation about that and then mother has
- disclosed the information that AR may be in possession

1		of a knife because there is one missing?	1		LANC000045. The text is just a wee bit small on this
2	A.	Yes.	2		but, if we could look at page 7, please.
3	Q.	So on the face of your account in your statement to the	3		Could we just have the last few lines highlighted,
4		Inquiry, that wasn't volunteered straightaway by AR's	4		right at the bottom of the page, to see if we can make
5		mother but arose after you had raised the issue of what	5		those a bit bigger.
6		had happened previously at his old school; would that be	6		The reference on the incident log referred to AR
7		fair?	7		having previously been bullied at school, which resulted
8	A.	Yes.	8		in him taking a knife into school. We will perhaps come
9	Q.	I think that detail doesn't appear, if you just cast	9		on to more detail about this a little bit later but were
10		your eye I'm not going to read it all out to prove	10		you aware that that had given rise to AR being convicted
11		a negative but I think that level of detail doesn't	11		of offences?
12		appear in your missing from home report; would that be	12	A.	Not at that time.
13		fair?	13	Q.	Did you become aware of that later?
14	A.	Yes.	14	A.	
15	Q.	But you tell us that you were aware of it from the	15		vehicle finishing off the report, I did.
16		incident log and then from the questioning that you had	16	Q.	-
17		carried out of AR's mother?	17		this because he believed he was being bullied, did she
18	A.	Yes, I think the mother divulged more information as	18		tell you anything more about the incident at the Range
19		I probed her further.	19		High School?
20	Q.	Thank you. If that could come down from the screen for	20	A.	I recall somebody being attacked, which wasn't the
21		a moment.	21		AR's intended target.
22		So we have looked at the police notebook entries	22	Q.	
23		that you are making and we have looked at the missing	23		a knife being carried?
24		from home report.	24	A.	I don't recall being aware of both.
25		If we go to the incident log, please, which is 113	25	Q.	Thank you. If we could go back, please, to LANC000082, 114
1		the missing from home report. If the relevant text	1	A.	No, not at that time.
2		could just be expanded.	2	Q.	Thank you. In addition to this missing from home
3		You set out relevant information. After referring	3		report, I think you also complete a missing from home
4		to being found at the Range High School within an hour	4		risk assessment, LANC000083, please. It may be obvious
5		on a previous occasion, but no further details about	5		from the title but just explain what the purpose of this
6		that in record, you say that:	6		document is?
7		"The range for which AR has left the house is	7	A.	It helps us assist the grading that we are going to give
8		between 0830 and 1115"	8		the missing from home.
9		So the timeframe in which he may have gone missing?	9	Q.	Is it intended to deal with the immediate risks of
10	A.	Yes.	10		dealing with the incident or is it looking at the longer
11	Q.	"He has [got] a house keep with him."	11		term risks, or do you not know?
12		You make a reference there to CCTV cameras: should	12	A.	I would say immediate. I think if you answered yes to
13		we understand that that's probably information of the	13		some of them questions, it was higher, the risk.
14		CCTV cameras that you completed a bit later?	14	Q.	Thank you. If we can just have the top half of the
15	A.	Yes.	15		page, please. Obvious things about the age, whether
16	Q.	But you do recall a small knife has gone missing from	16		there is a reason for the person going missing and
17		the kitchen:	17		particular risk factors. If we go down to the second
18		" Parent believes, but can't confirm, [AR] has	18		half of the page, please. We see:
19		this."	19		"Other unlisted factors which the officer or
20		Is that right?	20		supervisor considers should influence risk assessment?"
21	A.	Yes.	21		"If any of the above risk factors apply, input the
22	Q.	Was there any discussion at this stage about AR and his	22		details here."
23		access to knives in the home, anything about AR's family	23		I think you were keen to record that the missing
24		having tried to hide knives from AR, secure knives so	24		person "suffers with autism and ADHD", and took
25		that he couldn't take them? 115	25		sertraline; is that right? 116
		1.13)			1.10

1	Α.	Yes.

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2 Q. If we can go over the page, please. That continues:

"Parents believe he has gone missing as he does not wish to attend a meeting with his new school teachers ... could be in possession of a small knife which is missing from the kitchen. He has never threatened or attempted self-harm."

That last aspect, would you have asked AR's parents about that?

- 10 A. Yes, that was asked directly.
- Q. Thank you. You are saying here "parents", did AR's 11
- father join the conversation at some stage? 12
- 13 A. I think it was just the mother.
- Q. At this stage? 14
- At that stage. 15 Α.
- 16 Thank you. Then: Q.
- 17 "Risk level: Medium."
- 18 Again, it may seem obvious but the risk is what: the 19 risk to the missing person?
- 20 Α.
- 21 Q. The definition that's given here is:
- 22 "The risk of harm to the subject ... is assessed as
- 23 neither: Low ... nor High ..."
- 24 Where low is "unlikely to occur or be minimal" and 25 high is "both serious and likely to occur". At the risk 117
- 1 Q. Thank you. Sir, if we have on screen, please,
- 2 paragraph 74 of your statement, LANC000273 at page 17,
- 3 please. Paragraph 74, at the bottom:
- 4 "With all of the information available to me, 5
 - I deemed AR to be medium risk. I consulted PS Clarke
- 6 and he agreed with my decision as to medium risk."
- 7 Is that right?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 You go on to say that you don't think, in any event,
- that that assessment of the level of risk affected your 10
- response on the day. Why is that? 11
- 12 A. Lots of enquiries were done immediately. So we touched
- on before the Ormskirk CCTV operators the council ran, 13
- 14 I called them at the scene. They started checking that
- 15 straightaway. I think I had local PCSOs doing an area
- 16 search and there were enquiries going on immediately
- 17 which might not automatically happen with a medium risk
- 18 missing from home.
- 19 So in fairness to you, and we will come onto some of Q.
- 20 them, but there were quite a few tasks that you did and
- 21 you have mentioned some of them but you also checked
- 22 systems; is that right?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 So we should understand that, although it is
- 25 an assessment of medium risk, in no sense did you park 119

- 1 of stating the obvious, it is what sits between the two;
- 2 is that right?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Did you understand this form to relate in any way to the
- risk that the missing person might pose to others? 5
- 6 At the time, no.
- 7 Q. If I may say so, that was a careful answer: at the time
- 8 no. What's your understanding now?
- 9 A. I think with the benefit of experience, three years
- 10 later, when I'm assessing risk, I will look at the wider
- 11 risk, not just the missing from home but potentially to
- the other members of the public. 12
- 13 Q. Thank you. It is right to say, and in fairness to you,
- 14 that in this form at the time, other than what we saw
- 15 towards the bottom of page 1, "Other factors", there was
- 16 nothing on this form directing your attention, was
- 17 there, specifically to the risk that the missing person
- 18 might pose to others?
- 19 No, it is all tailored to the missing from home.
- 20 Q. Do you recall whether or not you consulted your sergeant
- 21 about this risk grading?
- 22 Yes. It is something I still do now, I always consult
- 23 the Sergeant before putting a missing from home on.
- 24 Q. How would you have done that?
- 25 Radio but it would have been a private call on radio.

- 1 this to deal with it later: you took immediate actions?
- 2 Δ Yes.
- Q. From the radio logs, we don't need to have them on the 3
- 4 screen -- sir, for your note LANC000255 and
- 5 LANC000254 -- there were two radio calls: one, I think,
- 6 at 12.35 lasting 23 seconds, I think that one was from
- 7 Sergeant Clarke; and then there was another one, from
- 8 you to Sergeant Clarke, at 12.38 which was longer, 5.5
- minutes. Would one of those calls have been the 9
- 10 discussion of the grading of risk?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Is it likely to have been the 12.38, the longer call,
- 13 lasting 5.5 minutes?
- 14 Α. Yes
- 15 Q. That was on a private call, effectively, I think what's
- 16 referred to as "point to point"; is that right?
- 17 Α.
- 18 Q. Can you just explain, so there's no misunderstanding
- 19 about that, why would that be made point to point on
- 20 a private call?
- 21 A. As you've just said there, it was quite a long call. We
- 22 wouldn't take up airtime with that, in case there was
- 23 an ongoing emergency or someone needs to shout up for
- 24 urgent assistance. It is something that can be done in
- 25 the background.

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- Q. One effect of that, it is not a criticism of you at all, 1
- 2 is that we are not able to have a transcript or
- 3 recording of that. Do you recall what it was that you
- 4 discussed within this exchange about risk with your
- 5 Sergeant?
- 6 A. I can't recall exactly but the normal process would be
- I would feed him the information I had been given from 7
- 8 a parent in this case and he would either agree or,
- 9 "Have you thought about this, have you thought about
- 10 that?", and we would take it from there.
- Now, would it have been open to you at later stages to 11
- 12 change that assessment of risk?
- 13 It can be done. Α.
- 14 Q. If it were suggested that this assessment of risk was
- 15 made too early in the process, was premature, what would
- 16 you say about that?
- 17 A. I think at the time, it was the correct decision and, to
- 18 my knowledge as well, I think the Duty Inspector will
- 19 review all missing from home logs and give their
- 20 opinions on the risk grading.
- 21 Q. In light of the knowledge at this stage, that this is
- 22 a youth who has had a previous attack at a school,
- 23 involving a knife and a knife is now missing, do you
- 24 think that there might have been a case for this being,
- 25 right from the start, graded as "high risk", even though
- 1 affect the risk grading ..."

- What sort of thing do you have in mind there?
- 3 A. Anything such as: a suicide note; a note where he might
- 4 have been; any medication -- not just necessarily his --
- 5 that's been taken; any immediate medication he didn't
- 6 have in his possession; simply things just as a bag, has
- 7 he packed a bag, is this more prepared for than we
- 8 thought? That sort of thing.
- 9 Q. We don't perhaps necessarily need to look it up but,
- 10 later on in your statement, paragraph 73, the phrase you
- 11 use, Constable, is:
- 12 "I also conducted a routine cursory search of AR's
- 13 home address."
- 14 Should we understand that this type of search of the
- 15 home or the bedroom of a missing person is different in 16
- intensity from a search that you are carrying out in
- 17 relation to criminality?
- A. Yes. You would still open drawers and cupboards but you 18
- 19 wouldn't touch every single object as you might with
- 20 another type of search.
- 21 You explain that you recall searching AR's bedroom and
- 22 the front living room; is that right?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 It took about 15 to 20 minutes?
- 25 A. Yes, that's about right.

- 1 you think that wouldn't have made a difference to
- 2 immediate action?
- 3 **A.** I was going off the opinion that there was a reason for
 - him going missing, ie he didn't want to meet his new
- 5 teachers, and the incident at the Range, I think, was
- 6 about just over two years prior at that point. So,
- 7 that's where the medium grading came from.
- 8 Q. At this stage, we will come on to later on, would it be
- 9 right to say that you didn't have any visibility of any
- 10 records or intelligence information between 2019 and
- 11 March 2022: you didn't know of any other events that may
- 12 have happened?
- 13 A. It came slightly later.
- 14 Thank you. I want to turn then to some of those early
 - actions and start with the search of the home address.
- 16 Can we look, please, first of all, in that regard, at
- 17 paragraph 17 of your statement, it is our page 4. So
- 18 LANC000273, page 4. You say there that, as part of the
- 19 initial actions you "conducted a search of the address",
- 20 and you touched earlier on this, that this would be
- 21 standard operational practice; is that right?
- 22 A.
- 23 **Q.** You set out in your statement that you were looking for:
 - "... any obvious signs of preparation made by AR or
- 25 if there was anything else that would cause concern and 122
- 1 Q. You mention the doors and drawers that you would open.
- 2 Would you have done a search of under AR's bed?
- 3 A. It would have been a very quick search at most, it would
- 4 have been a look under the bed.
- 5 Q. Thank you. The words you used there in your answer is
- 6 "it would have been a very quick search at most".
- 7 Should we just understand again, what I'm looking for
- 8 here is the best evidence that you can give factually.
- So if you can't remember, please say so. As you are 9
- 10 sitting there now, can you remember one way or the other
- 11 whether you looked under the bed?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. Would it be your usual practice to look under
- 14 a teenager's bed in a search of this kind for a missing
- 15 person?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Thank you. There is evidence, as I am sure you are now
- 18 aware, that by this time AR had purchased things like
- 19 chemistry equipment, conical flasks, safety goggles,
- 20 chemical grade alcohol. In relation to those items, if
- 21 you had seen items like that, is that something you
- 22 would have noticed, do you think?
- 23 A. Yes, absolutely.
- 24 And would have caused concern?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Later, after the dreadful attack, was found under AR's
- bed, in, effectively, a Tupperware-type container,
- a crude preparation of the toxin ricin, and we know that
- 4 AR had packaging of castor bean seeds, but the Latin
- 5 name would have included "ricin". If you had come
- 6 across castor bean seeds labelled as "ricin", packaging
- 7 referring to that, again, it may sound obvious, but is
- 8 that something you would have noticed and been concerned
- 9 about?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Caster bean seeds, if they were just that, as opposed to
- 12 any reference to ricin, would you have known what they
- 13 were?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Again, it's perhaps a very obvious point but the Latin
- or the English "ricin", on packaging, that would have
- 17 rung alarm bells?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 $\,$ **Q.** Should we take it from your evidence that you don't
- 20 recall seeing any items of that kind, the chemical
- 21 equipment or the ricin seeds?
- 22 A. No
- 23 Q. There is some evidence that, at this stage -- it's quite
- 24 early in the chronology of AR's purchase of weapons --
- 25 but there is some evidence that he had been trying to 125
- 1 $\,$ Q. When you say "no", do you mean, "No, and I don't think
- 2 I would have been expected to"?
- 3 A. No, I don't think I would have done, no.
- 4 Q. At this stage, other than the report that he may be
- 5 carrying a knife, principally at this stage this is
- 6 a missing person inquiry, rather than an investigation
- 7 into criminality; would that be fair?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Thank you. Moving on then next, if we may,
- 10 PC Fairclough to some of the other initial enquiries.
- 11 Having completed enquiries at the house, what did you do
- 12 next?
- 13 A. The first thing I think I done was the CCTV cameras that
- 14 I mentioned earlier. I recall calling the Range High
- 15 School because I had been given the information, and
- 16 informed them that he was -- well, he was missing and he
- 17 was potentially in possession of a knife. I think
- 18 I called --
- 19 Q. I'm just going to cause you there at the Range High
- 20 School. If we just have a look at LANC000031. This
- 21 is -- you said it makes repeat entries, so it's not just
- 22 one long entry but this is another aspect of your pocket
- 23 notebook entry, "Vicky Ashworth -- Range High School".
- 24 Would that be the person you contacted?
- 25 **A.** Yes.

- 1 order arrows and a bow, but there's also some evidence
- that he may have got a refund. Would archery arrows,
- 3 and I don't mean toy ones, serious looking arrows, and
- 4 a bow -- not a crossbow but a bow -- if those had been
- 5 present and you had seen them, would you have noticed
- 6 and been concerned?
- 7 A. Yes, absolutely.
- 8 Q. We can take it, therefore, that wherever it was you
- 9 looked if they were present, you didn't see those?
- 10 **A.** No.
- 11 Q. If you had seen those -- and I appreciate that it is
- 12 a hypothetical -- how would it have changed your
- 13 approach?
- 14 A. I would have called the Sergeant for advice at that
- 15 point.
- 16 Q. Electronic devices, do you recall seeing any electronic
- 17 devices in AR's bedroom or the living room?
- 18 A. I remember a gaming console, that's it.
- 19 **Q.** Would it be standard practice -- do you even have the
- 20 powers at this stage for a missing from home report --
- 21 to examine electrical devices?
- 22 A. Not informal.
- 23 Q. Would you therefore have done anything in relation to
- any kit, laptops and similar that may have been around?
- 25 **A.** No.

- 1 Q. Thank you. Recognising steps that you did take, you
- 2 have been told that this was the school for the previous
- 3 attack and, pretty swiftly, you have made direct contact
- 4 with that school; would that be fair?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Thank you. So sorry, I'd interrupted you but you had
- 7 dealt with the CCTV and the Range High School.
- 8 **A.** Yes
- 9 Q. Did you also make some checks with taxi companies?
- 10 A. Yes, it was to try and narrow time the timings that we
- had, had there been any calls to that home address that
- morning and did a male matching AR's description jump in
- 13 that taxi?
- 14 Q. Could we have a look at LANC000029, please. Of some
- 15 interest to the Inquiry, can you help us with it. The
- 16 entry is "Negative One Call Taxis"; what's One Call
- 17 Taxis?
- 18 A. One Call Taxis is the company I called. Negative is
- just saying there had been no calls to that address that
- 20 morning
- 21 Q. Thank you. We know that that is the taxi company that
- 22 was involved later in taking AR in his attack on the
- 23 Hart Space.
- Was there any reason for you calling them? Are they just the biggest local provider?

just the biggest local pi

- 1 A. I'm not great with the locality myself but I probably
- 2 would have just Googled the local taxi company and that
- 3 appears first.
- 4 Q. That's what comes up as the local taxi company?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. There is nothing more to it than that?
- 7 **A.** No.
- 8 Q. It wasn't anything you got from AR's parents to a taxi
- 9 company?
- 10 **A.** No
- 11 Q. Were they helpful? Were they prepared to say when
- 12 you -- did you identify yourself as a police officer?
- 13 A. I did.
- 14 Q. Did they comply with your request? Did they say whether
- or not they had taken a booking from that address?
- 16 A. I can't recall in person but I have put negative in the
- 17 pocket notebook entry, so that to me says, no, they had
- 18 no calls that day.
- 19 Q. If they had refused to answer the query -- and just so
- 20 you understand, DC Fairclough, why I'm asking this, one
- 21 of the issues that we are looking at is what duties
- there should be on taxi companies to answer questions
- 23 from teachers, police officers and parents about
- 24 bookings made by teenagers. But if One Call Taxis had
- 25 refused to answer your question, presumably you would
- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. You have mentioned the CCTV set out in your statement in
- 3 paragraph 19 -- we don't need to have it up -- you had
- 4 noticed some council CCTV. You had asked for enquiries
- 5 to be carried out. Do you know did they in fact ever
- 6 return any results or was AR found before it became
- 7 necessary?
- 8 A. I can't recall any results. They did have a lot of
- 9 footage to go back -- I think they had three hours of
- 10 footage to play back.
- 11 Q. All right. So those are queries and enquiries that you
- have made in relation, principally, to others. I want
- 13 you to take us through next, please, PC Fairclough, what
- 14 you did in relation to police systems. So, we know that
- there is a later stage which we will come onto, when you
- go to a fuller terminal, I think, back at the station.
- 17 But, initially, is it in your car outside the address?
- 18 A. Yes, I'm still in the vicinity of the address.
- 19 Q. You have your Samsung device and you've got the Pronto
- 20 software, is that right, to make your enquiries?
- 21 **A.** Yes
- 22 Q. Can you take it stage by stage. First of all, the
- 23 Samsung device that you had, so far as you can remember,

- 24 was it functioning correctly that day?
- 25 A. I recall it going slow but that's not unusual for the

- 1 have written more than "negative"?
- 2 A. Yes
- 3 Q. You would have said, "They are refusing to answer"?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. You tell us in paragraph 20 that you also made checks
- 6 with hospitals to see if AR was there?
- 7 A. Yes, that's just a routine check we would do with every
- 8 missing from home.
- 9 **Q.** You took the perhaps obvious but no doubt appropriate
- step of calling AR's mobile, which I think was running
- 11 straight through to voicemail?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 $\,$ **Q.** What about Presfield School; what can you remember in
- 14 relation to that?
- 15 A. Only that I had been told by his mother that that was
- 16 the new school he was due to attend shortly.
- 17 Q. If we look at LANC000030. With apologies for jumping
- around, but they are separate entries, but that's
- 19 another pocket notebook entry you made. Again, I don't
- 20 raise this critically. Not terribly informative because
- 21 it just says "Presfield". But do you think you would
- 22 have actually called that school?
- 23 A. I don't recall calling them.
- 24 Q. That is more an entry, is it, that you were noting that
- 25 that was where he was meant to attend?
 - 130
- 1 area we were in. The Banks area is known for quite poor
- 2 signal. It just runs off a mobile phone signal.
- 3 **Q.** Thank you. Other than in that area where there is poor
- 4 signal, was it generally an effective system?
- 5 A. Yes. That was only the second of two incidents
- 6 I attended that day, so I think that might have been the
- 7 first time I used my device. So I can't compare it to
- 8 anywhere else but, on that day in particular, it was
- 9 particularly slow.
- 10 Q. What about taking a wider view, day to day. Is it
- 11 a system that's prone to --
- 12 **A.** Can be hit and miss.
- 13 Q. All right. If we can look, please, at paragraph 66 of
- your statement on page 15, one of the things that you
- say there towards the bottom half of paragraph 66 is
- that, in relation to a Police National Computer check on
- 17 Pronto on the Samsung:
- 18 "... you are only given a date range and offence
- 19 category, such as an offence against the person, rather
- 20 than any specific offence."
- 21 Is that right?
- 22 **A.** Yes.
- 23 Q. You are not given a summary of offending on Pronto PNC?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. So you do get the information but it's at a higher level

- 1 of summary; is that right?
- 2 A. Yes, it lacks any detail.
- 3 Q. Thank you. I think that you will be aware that,
- 4 according to the records, if we look at paragraph 63 of
- 5 your statement, bottom of page 14, you have since been
- advised that there is no record of you doing a PNC check
- 7 but you say:
 - "... however to the best of my knowledge I did check
 - PNC as I was aware of an assault and possession of
- an offensive weapon by AR, which seemed to corroborate
- 11 the account given by [his] mother."
- 12 Is that correct?
- 13 **A.** Yes.

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- 14 Q. I think you say in your statement, it's the next
- sentence, that there is reference in one of the radio
- 16 transmissions to you having difficulties with your
- 17 Samsung device; would that be fair?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 $\,$ Q. So if I were to ask you the question, how confident are
- 20 you that you did a PNC check on your Samsung device,
- 21 what would your answer be?
- 22 A. Very high.
- 23 Q. So, what did the PNC check for AR actually tell you?
- 24 A. I can't recall seeing any warning markers, which it
- 25 normally was -- I recall seeing an offence against
 - 133
- 1 where we couldn't prove it but he'd still have been
- 2 listed, as I say, on the crime report.
- 3 Q. Is the Police National Database search something that
- 4 can be done instantaneously or does it take time?
- 5 A. No, it takes time.
- 6 Q. At the time, March 2022, how long would it take, roughly
- 7 speaking, for the results of that request to come
- 8 through?
- 9 A. I would have said weeks, if not months.
- 10 Q. The advantage of that, though, is that you would get, is
- 11 this right, from all Forces nationwide not just
- 12 convictions and cautions but intelligence information?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. Here, that would have included Merseyside --
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. -- whose systems you would not have direct visibility
- of, so far as any intelligence report is concerned?
- 18 A. That's correct.
- 19 Q. Again, putting hindsight to one side, for this type of
- 20 event, a missing person, but one who may be carrying
- 21 a knife, do you think that the attending police officer
- 22 would be expected to make a request for interrogation of
- the Police National Database?
- 24 **A.** No.
- 25 Q. Because?

- 1 a person and I think it was possession of an offensive
- weapon. And it tells you a date range on there.
- 3 I can't recall the date range exactly but it would
- 4 say -- for example, it would say between 2015 and 2020.
- 5 Q. As wide as sort of five years, something like that?
- 6 **A.** Yes, it can be a very wide range.
- 7 Q. Would you agree that, when you are dealing with a child,
- 8 knowing a bit more about the date might be important in
- 9 assessing risk?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Thank you.
- 12 You tell us that, having done the PNC check, this is
- paragraph 68 of your statement, page 16 -- LANC000273,
- 14 page 16 -- that you didn't carry out a Police National
- Database search on AR. First of all; is that right?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 **Q.** It may be second nature to you but what's the difference
- 18 between a Police National Computer check and a Police
- 19 National Database request?
- 20 A. So the National Computer check would only show
- 21 convictions, cautions, positive outcomes, if you like.
- The database check would show every time AR had been
- 23 listed as a suspect on a crime. It could be any
- 24 intelligence that another Force was holding on him and
- 25 it would also have negative -- it might be something
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- 1 A. It is all risk based, it is audited, there has to be
- 2 a risk to life. So there are certain offences that we
- would do it for immediately, and I think, from the top
- 4 of my head, they are sexual offences, they are immediate
- 5 risk to life and, the information I had at that time, he
- 6 did not meet that criteria.
- 7 Q. One of the things we need to look at as an Inquiry is
 - the IT and the systems and the visibility of
- 9 information. If you don't know the answer to this
- 10 please say so but, in your current role, do you have
- 11 cause to make queries of the National Database?
- 12 A. Yes.

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- 13 Q. What's the return time now?
- 14 A. I've not done a (unclear) for a long time, it does
- 15 fluctuate but it's still days. It's days rather than --
- 16 you wouldn't get it back the same day.
- 17 Q. Should we understand that it is better, though, than it
- 18 was in March 2022?
- 19 A. Yes, absolutely.
- 20 **Q.** Thank you. Then you have also checked CONNECT; is that right?
- 22 **A.** Yes.
- 23 Q. We have heard that that is the Lancashire system, on
- 24 which information would be retained, including
- 25 intelligence reports?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And non-crime information of other kinds?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. You can access that, can you, from the Samsung device?
- 5 A. Yes, it looks very different from the desktop but you
- 6 can access it.
- 7 Q. So should we understand it is more user friendly, like
- 8 a lot of things, on a full-size desktop than on
- 9 a portable device or phone?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. So that we understand it, are there any restrictions on
- the functionality of CONNECT on a phone? Are there
- things that you just cannot get on the mobile version
- 14 through Pronto or can you get to everything but it is
- 15 just less user friendly?
- 16 A. I'm not sure if this is the question you are alluding to
- 17 but you can't update it and things on the Pronto. So if
- 18 I was -- in terms of inquiries for AR, I could not
- 19 update them from scene, which is why they were done
- 20 later on, on the desktop. To my knowledge, everything
- 21 should be accessible.
- 22 Q. But we should bear in mind, should we, that, certainly
- 23 at this stage, it is not perhaps as user friendly as
- 24 instantaneously visible?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 information was on CONNECT, why you didn't understand
- 2 that fuller picture?
- 3 A. So I think on one of the incidents about the intention
- 4 to use the knife, it was listed as on an inquiry log,
- 5 rather than on the summary. So if I'm at the scene and
- 6 I'm on my Samsung device, I would tend to look at the
- 7 summary of what's happened. And then I think the second
- 8 incident that we are talking about might have been
- 9 recorded via an intel entry. I don't know where that
- 10 has come from initially, that's been recorded on Lancs'
- 11 systems as an intel entry, not as an investigation.
- 12 Q. You were looking principally, is this right, at
- 13 investigation reports?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 **Q.** If it came up as an inquiry log within an investigation
- 16 report, you may not have spotted it?
- 17 A. Yes, it would be on a different tab. You have to switch
- 18 through the tabs to see it.
- 19 **Q.** Certainly at this stage, outside in your police response
- 20 vehicle, you -- is this right -- wouldn't have been
- 21 looking at intelligence reports, you were looking mainly
- 22 at investigation reports?
- 23 $\,$ A. Yes, you can see it on the device but, as I say,
- 24 I thought it was the same incident.
- 25 **Q.** Thank you. If you had understood that there were two 139

- 1 Q. Thank you. If we can look, please, at paragraph 65 and
 - 66 of your statement. In these paragraphs, you accept,
- 3 is this right, that your understanding at the time from
- 4 the searches that you did was that the Range High School
- 5 matters were one incident?
- 6 A. Yes.

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- 7 Q. So one attack involving the carrying of a knife. You
- 8 didn't understand that in October 2019, there had been
- 9 a report that had come through from Childline involving
- AR having admitted to carrying a knife to school on some
- 11 ten separate occasions, leading to him being excluded
- 12 and then the separate incident in December 2019, in
- which he returned to the school with a hockey stick,
- used the hockey stick in an assault and had a knife.
- 15 You just didn't understand that those were two separate
- 16 events?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. Do you accept now that with full interrogation of
- 19 CONNECT, that is something which you could have
- 20 understood from the information that was available?
- 21 **A.** Yes.
- 22 Q. Thank you.
- Again, because we want to look at systems and how they work and what improvements might be made, can you
- 25 help the learned Chair to understand, given that that

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- 1 separate previous incidents back in 2019, separated by
- 2 a few months, the first being 10 occasions of carrying
- a knife to school, on his own admission, and then the
- 4 hockey stick attack with a knife also being carried,
- 5 would that have made a difference, do you think, to your
- 6 assessment?
- 7 A. Yes, possibly.
- 8 Q. Because?
- 9 **A.** There was a clear pattern there of behaviour. Where
- 10 I have treated it as an isolated incident, there is
- 11 a clear pattern of behaviour there.
- 12 Q. Is that something, in terms of your own practice that
- you have reflected on in terms of accepting yourself the
- 14 importance of trying to amalgamate all of the
- information that's available on the systems?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. But should we understand from your evidence that with
- how the systems operated at the time, that involved
- 19 a fair amount of moving around and checking tabs, it
- 20 wasn't particularly user friendly for you as an officer,
- 21 who clearly was making enquiries and looking at things
- and making reports, it wasn't entirely readily visible
- 23 to you on the systems?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. Would this be right as well, that the most detailed

- information about the 29 December incident, because it 1 2 was principally dealt with by Merseyside Police, 3 wouldn't have been available on CONNECT at all?
- 4 A. I think it was put through as an Intel entry but because 5 it is an intel entry, as a Lancs officer, I can't see 6 the source of that information, I can't find further 7 information out.
- 8 Q. So you could have seen Lancashire intelligence but, if 9 we were to look, for example, at MERP002881, you will 10 see, PC Fairclough, from the top of the page that this is the Criminal Justice Mental Health Liaison and 11 12 Diversion custody suite contact form. We know that this 13 was the Liaison and Diversion team assessment on AR but 14 in relation to the action being taken by Merseyside 15 Police.

So if we just then go down to the text. The main body of the main text, please. From this sort of information, what you can see is that AR was saying that this effectively was an attack where -- about five lines

"[He wasn't] planning to use the knife but states that he would have if the hockey stick did not work."

He had wrapped the hockey stick handle in tissue paper to get a better grip. Then:

"[AR] was asked if he was planning on killing the

- 1 checks that you did and you said they would have been on 2 CONNECT as an investigation. Did you spot and notice 3 them at the time?
- 4 A. Yes, but I didn't pay much attention to it, I didn't 5 think -- we go to a lot of incidents where children do 6 what AR had done on that occasion. That is nothing out 7 of the ordinary for a Response Officer.
- 8 Q. Are you confident are you, I don't think I'll be 9 corrected if I'm wrong, and I'm happy to be corrected 10 but I don't think you've mentioned in your witness statement being aware of those. Are you sure you did 11 12 notice them at the time?
- 13 Α. I'm fairly confident.

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14 Q. Thank you. One of them was noted in the log as well.

Sir, the note for that, for your reference, is

LANC000045, at page 6, the entry for 11.32.53, but I do not think we need to have it on the screen.

Would you have picked that up from the log, do you think, one of the November incidents?

- 20 A. Yes, I do read the logs fully before dealing with 21
- 22 Q. Can I ask you next, in terms of your system checks, 23 about Prevent. By this stage, AR had been referred to
- 24 Prevent on three occasions but, effectively, the
- 25 referrals had been closed and he had not been taken on 143

1 student and he replied, 'I did want to kill him but

2 I don't think I would. Ideally, I wish I did it. But

3 they were in assembly so it wouldn't have happened'. He 4 is clear this was revenge. We explored his decision

5 making around going to school ..."

6 That report, I think, not available to you on the 7 Lancashire systems?

- 8 A. No.
- 9 **Q.** Seeing information of that kind, would that have really 10 quite significantly altered your perception of what you 11 were dealing with, if you had been aware of the full 12 seriousness of the earlier event?
- 13 A. Yes, absolutely,
- 14 Q. We know -- I said that I would come on to intervening 15 events -- that there had been two occasions in November 16 2021, so four months or so before your involvement, 17 where police took calls from AR's parents in relation to 18 his violence, in terms of him getting angry and throwing

19 things. The precise details for present purposes don't 20

21 Were you aware of those from the checks that you 22

23 A. Yes, they would have been on CONNECT as an 24 investigation.

25 Q. My question was whether you were aware of them from the 142

- 1 by the next stage, by what's called a Channel panel.
- 2 At this stage, just short of the end of your 3 probationary period, what did you know about the Prevent 4 process?
- A. It was something that you could refer people into if 5 6 they were showing signs of potentially becoming 7 a terrorist.
- 8 Q. At the time, try, if you can, to think back to your 9 knowledge and understanding, as it was in March 2022,
- 10 "potentially becoming a terrorist" meaning what?
- 11 A. Showing some sort of ideology, whether they be political 12 believes, religious believes, extremism.
- 13 **Q.** Did you link it to a religious or political ideology or
- 14 did you understand it to be wider?
- 15 A. I linked it to political and religious.
- Q. So somebody who was extremely violent potentially, 16
- 17 interested in school shootings but not through any
- 18 political ideology or racism or religious ideology, did
- 19 you understand that somebody like that was potentially
- 20 covered by Prevent?
- 21 **A**.
- 22 Q. Do you understand that now?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. At the time when you were dealing with AR, let's take it 25
 - from what you have gone back to the car and you have

- 1 looked at the systems, did you have any knowledge of the
- 2 fact that AR had been referred to Prevent but hadn't
- 3 been "taken on" by Prevent?
- 4 **A.** No.
- 5 Q. Do you think that, as the frontline officer dealing with
- 6 this event at this stage, that was important information
- 7 that should have been visible to you?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 **Q.** Important for you to know?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Do you feel that that information would have made
- 12 a difference, even though the information, if you had
- had the full picture, may have told you that he hadn't
- 14 been taken on by Prevent but there had been three
- 15 referrals, do you feel that that information would have
- 16 made a difference?
- 17 A. Yes, absolutely, because there is a bit of a gap on the
- 18 CONNECT system with AR, I think, between 2019 and 2022,
- 19 with the exception of the incident we spoke about
- 20 before. To my knowledge them referrals but within that
- 21 timeframe, it certainly would have demonstrated to me
- that he was still a high risk and he hadn't changed from
- the 2019 incident.
- 24 Q. Thank you. I think that you already covered really that
- you can access intelligence reports or at least have
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- 1 A. Yes.

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- 2 Q. But it also says:
- 3 "[AR] has been searching for school shootings in
 - America but denies searching inappropriate content on
- 5 the school internet."
 - Were you aware that AR had been searching for school
- 7 shootings in America when you were dealing with him?
- 8 A. I can't recall that at the time.
- 9 Q. If you had been told that, is that something which you
- 10 likely would have noticed, taken note of and remembered?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. So should we understand that it is likely that you
- 13 weren't aware of that at the time?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Thank you.
- 16 If we go over the page, please. In the log of17 enquiries -- and I'm asked to explore this with you --
- in the log of enquiries section there is a log entry,
- 19 bottom right, that says:
- 20 "A Prevent referral has been received in CTB in
- 21 relation to school shootings in America."
- So, if you had looked up this document and not just read the substantive text but read through the log
- entries, as it were, in the fine print at the bottom,
- 24 entries, as it were, in the line print at the bottom,
- 25 the fact of a Prevent referral was there on Lancashire's 147

- 1 a level of visibility of intelligence reports on
- 2 CONNECT?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. If we can look, please, at LANC000064. If that can be
- 5 expanded, just the top, please. Just to get your
- 6 bearings on this because this is not your document, but
- 7 you see it is a Lancashire Constabulary intelligence
- 8 report, yes?
- 9 **A.** Yes.
- 10 **Q.** The date of it, submitted on 13 December but the event
- 11 11 December; do you see that there?
- 12 A. Yes

15

16

17

24

- 13 Q. So, if we go down and look at the text of the report
- 14 please, towards the bottom of the page, the final third,
 - please. So:

"[AR] has taken a prebooked taxi from Acorns School in Ormskirk to [the Range], armed with an adapted hockey

- stick and large knife in his bag in order to assault and
- 19 injury a pupil at the Range School. He subsequently
- 20 assaulted a pupil before being stopped by staff and was
- 21 arrested and interviewed where he later admitted to
- assault, possession of the knife and hockey stick."So just pausing there, that would have given s
 - So just pausing there, that would have given some more detail around the incident that you were aware of,
- 25 yes?

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- 1 systems; would you agree?
- 2 A. It was there on Lancashire's systems, however, frontline
- 3 officers cannot see that second page. So I would not
- 4 see that.
- 5 Q. Thank you. So you can't even see that second page?
- 6 **A.** No.
- 7 Q. Even if you could, as a frontline officer, who has got
- 8 to look up a number of systems and act on the scene, and
- 9 deal with matters relatively quickly, would you think
- 10 that, even if you could see that text, do you think
- that's a sufficient means of frontline officers being
- made aware of this kind of information?
- 13 **A.** No.
- 14 MR MOSS: Thank you.
- 15 Sir, I'm just looking at the time and I am about to
- 16 move on to my next topic and, as you know, this witness
- 17 was always due to return tomorrow. I am happy to carry
- on if you'd like but I wonder if that might be
- 19 a convenient moment?
- 20 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Yes, it is inevitable that we are not
- going to finish the officer's evidence this afternoon?
- 22 MR MOSS: Yes.
- 23 SIR ADRIAN FULFORD: Then this is entirely a convenient
- time. We will adjourn now and sit tomorrow at 10.00 in
- the morning.

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