

The individual members of the Inquiry Panel has each made their own declaration. However they are agreed that the following statement is common to them all.

“I do not believe I have any conflicts of interest that would prevent me from looking at the evidence dispassionately and fairly. However I will declare any conflicts should they arise in the future and willingly withdraw from any necessary hearings”

Lord Justice Leveson

Information placed before the Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sports prior to their approval of the instruments of appointment under sections 4(1) and 11(1) of the Inquiries Act 2005

Prior to my appointment, in addition to being a Lord Justice of Appeal, for three years I was the Senior Presiding Judge for England and Wales responsible to the Lord Chief Justice, among many other duties, for seeking ways to improve efficiency in the criminal justice system and specifically in the criminal courts. I am also Chairman of the Criminal Justice Council and had a seat on the National Criminal Justice Board, which had similar aims. Finally, I am presently Chairman of the Sentencing Council for England and Wales, which is required by law to have regard to ways it might promote public confidence in the criminal justice system and, as has been noted in the press, I have been critical of the way in which sentencing issues have been reported.

As I explained following an enquiry by the Evening Standard, when, by chance at a dinner in February 2010, I met Mr Matthew Freud of Freud Communications, I took the opportunity to discuss the issue of public confidence. Mr Freud then offered to assist the Council, on a pro bono basis, by considering ways in which this issue might be addressed. To that end, in my capacity as Chairman of the Sentencing Council, and to the knowledge of the Lord Chief Justice, I attended two large evening events at Mr Freud's London home: these were on 29 July 2010 and 25 January 2011. More recently, although there has been a meeting between officials of the Council and of Freud Communications, there is no continuing relationship. In any event, I was not involved in that meeting and I have neither met nor spoken to anyone from Freud Communications since January 2011.

My duties have brought me into contact with representatives of each of the areas covered by the inquiry. Thus, in these capacities, at a strategic level, I have had dealings with the then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and have worked closely with Mr Tim Godwin, now Acting Commissioner, who has been the ACPO lead on criminal justice. We have sat on boards which developed improvements to the efficiency of the magistrates courts, (colloquially known as CJSSS), as well as other schemes such as virtual courts, community justice and split shift sittings in the Crown Court. More recently, Mr Godwin has been a member of the Sentencing Council.

On a very few occasions, we have dined along with others in our official capacities and I attended a celebration of his 50th birthday. We have never discussed operational matters of any sort. I add, for completeness that Deputy Assistant Commissioner Akers has confirmed that there is no suggestion that Mr Godwin was involved in any way in the police investigation or initial review which forms part of this Inquiry. As far as I am aware, I have never met the former Assistant Commissioner, Mr John Yates.

Prior to my appointment to the Inquiry, I reminded the Lord Chief Justice of these matters and ensured that both my contact with Mr Freud and the fact that I had had dealings with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police were brought to the attention of the Prime Minister.

Since my appointment, the terms of reference have been altered to include prosecuting authorities and politicians. In relation to the former, as Senior Presiding Judge, I also worked with Keir Starmer Q.C., the present Director of Public Prosecutions (on whose selection committee I sat and who is also a member of the Sentencing Council). I also worked on the same basis with his predecessor (now Lord Macdonald of River Glaven Q.C.). Again, I have not discussed operational issues with either.

As for politicians, I have worked with the present Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary, the Rt Hon Kenneth Clark, Q.C., along with his predecessors, the Rt Hon Jack Straw M.P. (whom I first met on holiday some 20 years ago although we lost touch with each other in the late 1990s until his appointment as Lord Chancellor) and the Rt Hon Lord Falconer of Thoroton. I have also worked with their ministers.

None of my close family has any connection with the matters I am likely to investigate.