

Minutes – Bayoh Family Meeting with the Chair – 5 December 2024

Participants:

Alastair Campbell

Angela Grahame

Laura Thomson

Gill Surfleet

Inquiry staff

Sadif Ashraf

Inquiry staff

Aamer Anwar

Claire Mitchell

April Meechan

Inquiry staff

Kadi Johnson

Ade Johnson

Adama Jalloh

Kosna Bayoh

Item 1 – Opening remarks by Chair, including progress of Inquiry to date and consideration of Terms of Reference by the Scottish Government

The Chair started by stating this is his fourth meeting with the family and explained the purpose of this meeting is for him to hear from the family on any issues they would like to discuss. He acknowledged that the family has requested an extension to the terms of reference to include the prosecutorial decision and the VRR and that we are currently waiting on this decision. He explained that he has had a meeting with and written to the DFM regarding the extension and believes the family has read this letter, which they confirmed. He asked the family to discuss how they have been coping.

All family members expressed their gratitude for how the inquiry has run so far and for following through on the intention of keeping the family at the centre of the inquiry. They also noted that the delay is preventing them from being able to move on as a family and they would like a decision to be made quickly.

Kadi said that the Inquiry has been good, it has taken time to look into evidence and she is happy with the way things have gone. We have gone to the centre of it, and she is grateful for that.

Ade also thanked the Chair and the Inquiry on behalf of the family for following through on their initial promises and keeping the family at the centre. He mentioned that there have been very few inquiries like this before and that their views of inquiries were negative in the past. People told them that they would be wasting their time asking for an inquiry, but the Chair has given them an opportunity to learn something different. The family want to promote that and think this Inquiry should be used as a benchmark for the future and he hopes promoting this approach to inquiries forms part of the recommendations. He stated that we have led by example, by doing what we say we are going to do, which has given them the opportunity to be heard.

Alastair stated he was grateful for the family's remarks.

Aamer also expressed his thanks to the Chair and the team for being the only authority in nine years that has managed to retain the family's trust. He emphasised that the family would like a decision to be made to put an end to the ongoing back and forth and they are not sure how else to push this forward other than to publicly appeal. He mentioned that they will be writing to the SPF, Police Scotland and Crown to ask if they support an extension to the terms of reference, since they originally supported the Inquiry.

Item 2 – The format of submissions

Ade asked if the family would be given the opportunity to present something during the closing submissions from a personal perspective rather than a legal perspective. He explained that they would like to read a statement, similar to what they did at the beginning of the inquiry, to express the impact this inquiry has had on the family.

Alastair said he believes this should be feasible. Sadif agreed, saying it could be looked into and worked into the schedule.

Item 3 – How the report will be structured

Alastair explained that the report is still in the very early stages and the structure will be dictated by the terms of reference and chapters based on evidence heard. He asked the family if there was any particular matter they wanted to discuss.

Ade asked whether there would also be an 'easy-to-read' version with less legal jargon to allow people without a legal background to better understand it.

Aamer also raised the suggestion of publishing the report in different languages, with Claire emphasising the importance of making it as accessible as possible given the subject matter of race. Aamer also raised the issue of potential leaks and asked how far in advance the family would be able to read the report to allow them to absorb the information and prepare any responses.

Gill responded that the Inquiry has been considering an easy-to-read option and publishing the report in different languages. They have also been discussing timelines for the publication and reassured the family that they will be kept informed throughout the process.

Item 4 - Update from Inquiry Secretary on Inquiry accommodation

Gill mentioned that the family were previously told that Capital House was put up for sale. She confirmed that an offer has been made and we are not sure if this has been accepted, but she will keep the family updated. She also noted that timescales have not been confirmed yet but if another hearing is to take place the Inquiry will ensure there is suitable accommodation.

Alastair stated that from his point of view, he is now awaiting the DFM's decision in order to move forward. He thanked the family for attending today's meeting.

Meeting closed and Chair left:

Kadi reiterated Ade's previous comments, stating this inquiry should be an example for future inquiries.

Aamer Anwar also emphasised his previous comments, stating that this is the first time in 25 years that he can say they have kept their promises.

Ade mentioned that he is grateful to Gill and [REDACTED] inquiry sta and wants to acknowledge their contributions. They help with their understanding of how the inquiry works behind the scenes and keep them updated with staffing changes, and getting these small things right is important as these can build into bigger things. He added that they hope to have the truth at the end of the day and want to know where accountability needs to be held.