

Summary of the ‘Knopwood Report’ for West Yorkshire Police about ‘Operation Newgreen’: DCS Knopwood’s review of West Yorkshire Police’s contact and relationship with Jimmy Savile (Savile’s primary residence being in Leeds, West Yorkshire), published 10th May 2013

The Knopwood report is an easily accessible 59 document and readers interested in the detail of DCS Knopwood’s considerations are encouraged to read the original report, of which this is only a brief summary. In this article added commentary is in italics.

Note: This might be regarded as a somewhat self-exonerating review of their own conduct by West Yorkshire Police (WYP). The independent review by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary(HMIC) ‘Mistakes were Made’ suggests that HMIC did not entirely concur with the WYP report and notes that the Independent Police Complaints Commission are considering aspects of WYP conduct in relation to Savile

The report details ‘ the findings of a comprehensive review (Operation Newgreen) by West Yorkshire Police (WYP) regarding the Force’s relationship with the late Sir James Savile. The report focuses on all identified instances where WYP had interacted with Savile and examines whether there had been any impropriety by any member of WYP, the lessons to be learned and how current practices address areas of concern’ (p7).

The report emphasises that, in relation to Savile, the information received by ‘Operation Newgreen’ spans seven decades, as a consequence of which some of the information remains sketchy and vague due to the passage of time, legitimate weeding of information and the fact those who may have been able to provide an answer have since died.

The report goes on to focus on 6 main areas:

- Savile’s relationship with WPS;
- Identified victims of Savile’s abuse;
- Operation Newgreen;
- Intelligence and information regarding Savile:
- The ‘Friday Morning Club’;
- Savile’s link to The Yorkshire Ripper Enquiry.

Savile’s relationship with West Yorkshire Police

The report puts WYP’s relationship with Savile in the context of the routine use of celebrities to support crime prevention campaigns in the police service, intended to generate greater engagement with the public and create improved media interest in the campaign.

A retired Senior Officer told the enquiry that around 1983 he had been encouraged by the then Chief Constable to hold monthly lunches at a Leeds police station with local dignitaries in an effort to improve the image of WYP. Present would be six senior officers and six invited high profile local people. Guests included the Bishop of Leeds, the regional head of British Telecom,

judges, barristers, local heads of business and, on one occasion, Jimmy Savile. He stated that Savile had `held court` and had dominated conversations as a result of which he was not asked to attend further lunches. (*The wording of the report makes it unclear how frequently Savile attended before invitations ceased.*)

Various other, relatively low key, invitations to events or other involvements in campaigns are detailed. The report notes that Savile's relationship with WYP appears to have been based on his friendship with a serving officer and this connection was utilised in most instances to secure his services. The effect of this had been that arrangements were made on a local, often informal basis rather than corporately through a dedicated media route. The report concludes that a more formal arrangement would have been preferable before commenting 'Savile's celebrity status spanned many decades and he was seen by the public as a man who 'did good'. He was able to manage his public persona in such a way that he deceived most people he met. He was a manipulative man who exploited to the worst possible degree the trust people placed in him' (p19).

Identified victims of Savile's abuse

Police forces across the country received allegations following the ITV programme 'Exposure' broadcast on 3rd October 2012, in which a number of allegations were made against Savile regarding child abuse offences. As of 3rd May 2013, WYP had received 116 reports from members of the public relating to Jimmy Savile. These related to 76 alleged crimes by Savile involving 68 victims in the West Yorkshire area, 72 of them in the Leeds area. Victims, 72% of whom were female, ranged in age from 5 - 45 years, with 45% in the 14 -17 year age range. None of these cases had been reported to WYP prior to Savile's death. The main decades when the alleged offences had been committed were in the 1960s and 1970s (83% of the allegations), when Savile had been aged between 34 and 54.

Operation Newgreen

This section of the Knopwood report is an account of the work undertaken which led to the report's completion. A team of 14 detectives, plus management and support, spoke to over 200 people, resulting in 400 officer-led enquiries being conducted across the United Kingdom and Ireland involving 3000 working hours.

Intelligence and information regarding Savile

Operation Newgreen investigated a significant number of intelligence and information records related to Savile, some provided by other forces and organisations such as HMIC and MPS and others identified during the review. These included:

1. *A 1958 press report of a potential court case involving Savile;*
2. *The 1964 Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) ledger held by the MPS Paedophile Unit;*
3. *An anonymous letter received by MPS in 1998;*
4. *A 2003 crime report held by the MPS regarding the complaint of*

- a Savile victim;
5. *Information held by Surrey Police in relation to Duncroft School during 2007-2009 based on complaints made by Savile's victims;*
 6. *Information provided to 'Operation Yewtree' by former WYP officers and staff.*

The report's findings on the main four of the above (given in italics) are summarised below:

1. *A 1958 Press Report of a Potential Court Case involving Savile*
There are newspaper reports on the internet indicating that Savile was interviewed by West Yorkshire Police in 1958 in relation to offences of indecency involving 'young girls' and that he had been scheduled to appear in court regarding allegations that he was involved in the sexual abuse of young girls. *At that time Savile would have 35 years old.* In October 2012 it was reported in the media that in an interview by a journalist with a former employee of Savile's club, the *Mecca Locarno* in Leeds, it was claimed that Savile had come into the club one day worried because he was due in court for 'interfering with young girls'. There is a suggestion that this did not proceed due to Savile paying off the victims' families. The report clarifies that a suggestion that Savile had suggested he had also paid off the police was in error.

No further information was located that related to Savile being investigated and charged with any criminal offences in 1958.

3. *The anonymous letter received by MPS in 1998*

In 1998 the MPS had received an anonymous letter detailing their concerns about Savile's sexual offending. Operation Newgreen made extensive efforts to establish whether information regarding the letter had been received by WYP and if so what had happened to it.

A Detective Constable who worked within the WYP Force Intelligence Bureau during this time recalled receiving some information from MPS relating to Savile in or around 1998 but could not remember the specific content of the report or who had sent it. The officer had not recorded the information on any WYP computerised system but had brought it to the attention of their second line manager, a Detective Inspector, who had taken the information and had subsequently advised that the matter was in hand. This Detective Inspector died in 2002, so no further clarification was available to the enquiry.

The enquiry concludes that the Detective Constable should have entered the information received in 1998 on the WYP intelligence system.

5. *Information held by Surrey Police in relation to Duncroft School during 2007-2009 based on complaints made by Savile victims (Readers may wish to consider this account in conjunction with the summary of Operation Ornament, the Surrey Police enquiry into their investigation and the Levitt DPP report in NOTA News Issue 70 July/August)*

This primarily relates the sending and receiving of information between 2008 and 2009 regarding the Surrey Police investigation 'Operation Ornament' and telephone conversations between officers in each force.

WYP had received a request from Surrey Police on 29th April 2008 asking what information or intelligence relating to Savile was held on WYP systems. This request had been made via the Force's anti-corruption unit as a precautionary measure to ensure the investigation would remain confidential. WYP had replied on 6th May 2008 and identified that one crime report existed, when Savile had been the victim of a theft of spectacles.

In July 2008 there was a 'phone conversation between the Surrey Senior Investigating Officer, a Detective Inspector, and the acting Head of the WYP Child Protection Unit, a temporary Detective Chief Inspector (T/DCI) during which it had been agreed that an intelligence report containing the allegations made against Savile would be sent to WYP. No record of this report can be found on WYP intelligence systems.

On 2nd June 2009 Surrey Police had sent a recorded delivery letter to Savile at his home address in Leeds asking that he make contact with them. On 3rd June 2009 Surrey Police had provided an update on the enquiry and confirmed that they intended to interview Savile regarding the Duncroft School allegations.

On the 10th June 2009 the Surrey Senior Investigating Officer, the Acting Head of the WYP Child Protection Unit had advised that on 8th June 2009 an inspector from WYP, had contacted Surrey police, 'control room to control room', on behalf of Savile, as Savile had lost the investigating officer's contact details. During the conversation with the Surrey Police control room the WYP inspector stated that he was a personal friend of Savile and that 'Jimmy gets so many of these type of complaints'.

The Surrey Senior Investigating Officer had also advised that on initial contact Savile had told them that there was a West Yorkshire Inspector who normally deals with this sort of thing.

The contact between WYP and Surrey Police, involving several officers, is now subject of a referral to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPPC).

6. Information Provided to Operation Yewtree by former WYP Officers and Staff

The report considers a number of potentially concerning issues arising out of 'Operation Yewtree'. In summary none was found to be substantiated, although one matter relating to a possible WYPS investigation of Savile by the Vice Squad has been referred to the IPCC for further consideration.

The Friday Morning Club (FMC)

There has been significant media commentary regarding what became known as the 'Friday Morning Club', a regular meeting at Savile's home address in Leeds.

During the Knopwood enquiry a Sergeant stated that he had first met Savile whilst a community officer covering the area where Savile had lived. He had been invited by Savile for a coffee at his flat and had accepted the invitation. At the time WYP had been encouraging officers to have more interaction with the community and so it had not been irregular or inappropriate to accept. From then on he would often call at Savile's home on a Friday morning when other friends of Savile would also be present. On occasions, Savile was not present and so he would have a cup of tea with Savile's cleaner.

He said that it was a social gathering of Savile's friends – some old school friends and others whom he had met and formed a friendship with during his lifetime in Leeds - with attendees drinking tea and coffee and chatting about current affairs. As it tended to be the same people who attended, he termed the group the 'Friday Morning Club' (FMC). The Sergeant said nothing had occurred at the FMC that had compromised his position as a serving WYP officer.

During his Surrey Police interview in October 2009 (See the 'Operation Ornament' summary in NOTA News Issue 70 July/August) Savile had mentioned 'senior police people' attending his home to drink tea, saying that he received 'weirdo' letters on a regular basis that he had handed to the police officers during these meetings.

After extensive investigation of this involving interviews with everybody known to have either attended the FMC or who knew of its existence - over 40 people including police officers, retired police officers, friends, associates and employees of Savile, both male and female - WYP concludes that the FMC was an occasional meeting of a group of people to have coffee, tea and a chat about current affairs or Savile's celebrity tales at his home.

Savile's link to the Yorkshire Ripper Enquiry

Records were examined to establish if Savile had ever been a person of interest during the WYP investigation into the murders and attacks committed by Peter Sutcliffe between 1976 and 1981. No such evidence was found.

Conclusion

Whilst expressing concerns about process and recording, the WYP report concludes that they are '... satisfied that the work undertaken by Savile in support of local and force campaigns and events was entirely appropriate at the time' (p.49).

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