

REVIEW REPORT

IPCC INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO COMPLAINTS FOLLOWING “THE BOYS WHO KILLED STEPHEN LAWRENCE”

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INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) undertook an independent investigation into allegations that police officers withheld information involving corruption in the original police investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The allegations of corruption featured in a BBC programme broadcast on 26 July 2006 entitled “The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence” and explored the circumstances of Stephen Lawrence’s murder on 22 April 1993 and the ensuing police investigation.

During the programme a former South East Regional Crime Squad Detective, Neil Putnam, was interviewed and made allegations of police corruption in the Stephen Lawrence murder enquiry.

Neil Putnam was himself arrested in July 1998 for corruption offences and was convicted in the same year and sentenced to five years imprisonment.

Following his arrest, Neil Putnam entered into a resident informants scheme with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and gave information and intelligence in relation to allegations of corruption against his former colleagues from the East Dulwich office of the South East Regional Crime Squad.

The investigation into police corruption was known as ‘Operation Russia’ and a number of police officers were subsequently convicted and sentenced to substantial terms of imprisonment.

During the Documentary programme Putnam made allegations that he told officers debriefing him as part of Operation Russia that one of his former colleagues, ex-Detective Sergeant John Davidson, had told him that he had looked after the interest of Clifford Norris’s son David during the initial Stephen Lawrence murder investigation. (David Norris was one of the main suspects in the case and has now been convicted of Stephen Lawrence’s murder.) John Davidson had implied that he had received payment using the words “he’s a good little earner”.

Davidson was a member of the initial murder investigation team into Stephen Lawrence’s death having joined the team the day after the murder. He was involved in the investigation for some weeks and gave evidence to Sir William Macpherson’s Public Inquiry.

As a result of the allegations of corruption being made on the Documentary programme, formal complaints were made to the IPCC by Stephen’s parents, Doreen and Neville Lawrence.

John Wadham, Deputy Chair of the IPCC, made the decision that an independent investigation would be undertaken and IPCC Senior Investigator John Cummins was appointed to undertake the investigation.

The investigation concluded that “we have found no evidence in support of the allegations made during the programme”.

The IPCC investigation report was shared with Doreen and Neville Lawrence and was subsequently published on the IPCC website in 2007.

During early March 2012, the issues of police corruption in the Stephen Lawrence investigation were again raised in various newspaper articles and a decision was taken by the IPCC to undertake a review of the original IPCC investigation to examine the allegations investigated in 2006 and compare them with the recent allegations being featured in the media.

IPCC Senior Investigator Paul Davies, Standards & Quality Directorate, was appointed to undertake a focussed, proportionate review into the main allegations.

The review commenced on 2 April 2012 and the following Terms of Reference for the review were agreed.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW

- To undertake a review of the IPCC 2006 independent investigation which examined the allegations of police corruption in the murder investigation of Stephen Lawrence, made by Neil Putnam.
- The review will examine the allegations made in 2006 and compare them to recent allegations of corruption being made by journalists in various news articles.
- The review will establish if the allegations currently being made have been previously investigated by the IPCC as part of the independent investigation in 2006 and, if so, whether the findings were consistent with the available evidence.
- If the allegations have been previously investigated, establish whether any new evidence or information exists which did not form part of the 2006 investigation.
- If new evidence or information exists which did not form part of the 2006 investigation, detail how this may have effected the conclusions reached and recommend how this may now be addressed.

METHODOLOGY

In order to undertake this review, documentation has been made available from the original IPCC investigation including all witness statements obtained during the investigation together with relevant documents. In addition, the taped transcripts of the IPCC interviews with Neil Putnam have been obtained and examined.

The original investigation was placed on a HOLMES (Home Office Large Major Enquiry System) account and access to this has been facilitated.

The two main recent newspaper articles from the Independent and Guardian newspapers featuring allegations of corruption in the Stephen Lawrence investigation have also been examined to allow comparisons to the allegations investigated by the IPCC in 2006.

Both journalists responsible for writing the articles have been written to in an attempt to establish if they have any new evidence that may assist this review.

Contact has also been made with the Metropolitan Police Directorate of Professional Standards Department to enquire if they have uncovered any new evidence as a result of the recent media coverage.

Finally, solicitors acting for Mr and Mrs Lawrence have been written to advising them of this review and enquiring if Mr and Mrs Lawrence themselves are aware of any new information or evidence that may assist this review.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE 2006 IPCC INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGATIONS OF POLICE CORRUPTION RELATING TO THE FIRST INVESTIGATION INTO THE MURDER OF STEPHEN LAWRENCE

- 1a To investigate the allegation that ex-Detective Sergeant John Davidson had a 'corrupt relationship' with Clifford Norris.
- 1b To investigate whether any such 'corruption' tainted the actions of DS Davidson, either directly or indirectly, in the first investigation into the murder of Stephen Lawrence.
- 2a To investigate the allegation that ex-Detective Constable Neil Putnam provided information to the Metropolitan Police concerning the 'relationship' of DS Davidson and Clifford Norris and in particular that:
 - (i) No action was taken by the Metropolitan Police in relation to this information.
 - (ii) The information was not passed to the Stephen Lawrence enquiry.

- 2b To investigate the allegation that the Metropolitan Police, despite knowing or strongly suspecting that DS Davidson was 'corrupt', misinformed and/or withheld such knowledge/suspicion from the Stephen Lawrence enquiry.
- 2c To make recommendations regarding any possible criminal or misconduct culpability revealed.
- 2d Make any recommendations on MPS or National Police Policy which arise from this investigation. Any fast time learning issues will be conveyed in a timely manner.
- 2e The IPCC is aware that the family of Stephen Lawrence have been long suspicious and indeed allege that 'corruption' played a part in the 'First Police Investigation' into his death. The IPCC acknowledges that if such allegations are true, then other officers may be involved. The investigation will at all times have this in mind and should any information come to light during the course of the investigation suggesting criminality or misconduct on the part of other officers or ex officers, this will be subject of a fresh determination on how that information should be addressed.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND

Following the broadcast of the BBC Documentary Programme on 26 July 2006 "The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence" and formal complaints from Stephen Lawrence's parents, Doreen and Neville Lawrence, the ensuing IPCC independent investigation categorised the complaints received into three specific areas.

1. Allegations that the officers who had debriefed Neil Putnam had failed to record or act upon information he had given them concerning allegations of corruption in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.
2. The Metropolitan Police Service had failed to advise the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry of the concerns regarding the witness DS John Davidson.
3. The allegation of corruption involving Davidson and Clifford Norris, the father of one of the suspects implicated in the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The IPCC investigation report, published in 2007, details the methodology that the investigation team employed in order to undertake an extensive investigation into the three main areas detailed above.

The report states “The first allegation is linked to the arrest and interviews of Neil Putnam. Mr Putnam is a former Metropolitan Police Officer who was arrested in July 1998 for offences of corruption. He decided to assist the officers from the Metropolitan Police who were investigating the corruption allegations and after he was charged with various offences, he was entered into the Resident Informants Scheme and he subsequently provided information concerning some of his former colleagues.

This investigation into the corruption allegations was known as ‘Operation Russia’. A number of serving police officers were convicted of offences of corruption and received substantial prison sentences.

The documentation from this investigation was held by the Metropolitan Police in secure storage. The IPCC was given full access to this material and as a result took possession of a number of documents including the records of interviews with Neil Putnam.

The IPCC investigation also interviewed a number of police officers, former police officers and witnesses including members of Mr Putnam’s family, leading Counsel, former members of the CPS and members of the media.

In respect of the second allegation, again documentation has been seized and witnesses both within the Metropolitan Police Service and former members of the Stephen Lawrence [murder investigation] team have been interviewed.

In respect of the third allegation of corruption in the original murder investigation, the IPCC were conscious that the Metropolitan Police Service is still investigating the murder of Stephen. As a result it was important at the outset, to draw up a memorandum of understanding with officers from ‘Operation Athena Tower’ the reinvestigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Meetings were held with senior officers involved in the reinvestigation. Whilst recognising that the investigation was still ongoing, the IPCC were given full access to the information available to the MPS.

There have also been a number of previous investigations and reviews into the murder of Stephen on 22 April 1993. There was also the PCA/Kent complaint investigation and the Stephen Lawrence [Macpherson] Inquiry. The IPCC has had access to all the documentation from these inquiries, investigation and reviews.

The IPCC had also had access to confidential information held by the Anti-Corruption Command of the Metropolitan Police. Access was obtained to reports concerning alleged corruption of a number of former officers of the Metropolitan Police.

It was apparent at the outset that the MPS conducted a number of different inquiries over the possibility that ‘corruption’ may have been a feature of the murder investigation. Copies of these reports have been obtained.

A number of former police officers, serving police officers and civilian witnesses have been interviewed”.

OBSERVATIONS

The Terms of Reference for the IPCC independent investigation were sufficiently focussed to enable a proportionate investigation into the main issues identified from the BBC Documentary programme. They were drawn up following a meeting between the IPCC with the complainants, Mr and Mrs Lawrence, and their legal representatives.

Categorising the complaints into three main areas allowed the investigation to focus on the key issues under investigation.

It is also worth noting at this stage that the IPCC investigation was subject to a full internal review which commenced on 7 September 2006, its Terms of Reference being:

“To examine the structure of the Investigation Team and the investigative process and ensure they meet the needs of the investigation.

The review to include an examination of the policy decisions and investigative strategies and to ensure that all relevant lines of enquiry have been identified”.

The methodology adopted by the original IPCC enquiry team and detailed previously, shows a meticulous approach to the investigation with key documents and witnesses being identified at an early stage.

Of course, central to the allegations was Neil Putnam who was interviewed in depth by IPCC investigators on 14 September 2006. These interviews were recorded on DVD as follows:-

Interview 1	between 1107 hrs and 1202 hrs	55 minutes
Interview 2	between 1220 hrs and 1310 hrs	50 minutes
Interview 3	between 1410 hrs and 1500 hrs	50 minutes
Interview 4	between 1521 hrs and 1610 hrs	49 minutes
Interview 5	between 1629 hrs and 1714 hrs	45 minutes

It was during these interviews that Putnam repeated his allegation of police corruption in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation. He claimed that he had informed his debriefers as part of Operation Russia that his ex-colleague DS John Davidson had told him that he had looked after the interest of Clifford Norris’ son David during the initial Stephen Lawrence murder investigation and implied that he had received payment, using the words ‘he’s a good little earner’.

During the interviews with IPCC investigators, Neil Putnam described how he entered the Residents Informants Scheme and how he was debriefed by three officers, working in pairs, who would write down information he would provide in A4 note books, which would later be used to construct a witness statement. Usually a new A4 book would be used for each case and Putnam and the officers would then sign and date all the entries. Putnam believed that his allegations about Davidson had been written down in one of the A4 books.

Significantly during his IPCC interviews, Putnam was able to describe the date he allegedly told his debriefers about this information as he claimed it was when he was discussing Davidson in the context of 'old man Norris being a nice little earner' and it was against the background of a Nigerian gang who were committing robberies on jeweller shops.

An examination of the debrief books showed this debrief into the Nigerian gang took place on 28 July 1998 at Dover Police Station and Putnam was shown the entry recorded in a debrief book in relation to the information he had supplied about the Nigerian gang. However this book did not record any reference concerning the Davidson/Norris corruption allegation.

Putnam was interviewed by IPCC investigators:

IPCC Investigator: "It was that day that they made notes about part of that conversation that you had back at the East Dulwich Office on that day.

Putnam: "Mmm ... yeah."

IPCC Investigator: "Can you explain why they didn't record the other part of that conversation that you told them which was the detail concerning the Norris/Davidson thing".

Putnam: "The Norris part of it wouldn't have been my criminality, this is my criminality with others and that would have gone in the intelligence book I would have thought."

IPCC Investigator: "So you're not surprised that's not recorded in there."

Putnam: "Erm ... I am actually because it was that day"

IPCC investigators obtained the intelligence books referred to above and showed Putnam detailed entries on 18 August 1998 concerning background intelligence on Davidson which had been provided by him.

During his interview with the IPCC, Putnam was asked to read out the considerable entry that had been recorded verbatim by the police debriefers. The entries did not refer to any allegation of corruption in the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation or the link to Clifford Norris.

Putnam was asked by IPCC investigators during his interview:

"Why does it not include the information that you gave them about"

Putnam: "I've no idea ... no idea whatsoever."

IPCC Investigator: "Would you have expected that information to be included in

that section".

Putnam: "Yeah I would have done erm. I mean that's that That's him that's everything about him that I knew".

IPCC Investigator: "Mmm."

Putnam: "Yeah I would have expected it to be there, I don't know why it's not."

IPCC Investigator: "You've signed the bottom of every page if when you read through that obviously you would have realised that that ..."

Putnam: "Yeah."

IPCC Investigator: "... it wasn't there, did you flag that up or ..."

Putnam: "No I didn't, no be ... I read it and it was done and ... cause it's a long time ago but no I'm surprised it wasn't there, I kept expecting as I was reading through to think ah its there".

IPCC Investigator: "Yeah."

Putnam: "... but it er no, I've no idea why it wasn't there".

In my view this casts considerable doubt on Putnam's claims that he informed his debriefers about alleged corruption between Davidson and Clifford Norris and that these allegations were written down into A4 books by these officers. Original entries signed and dated by Putnam have been examined and shown to him and no such contemporaneous record appears to exist.

From reviewing the 2006 IPCC investigation it is also apparent that in 2000, following his release from prison, Putnam was interviewed by Graeme McLagan, a BBC journalist and he appeared in a BBC documentary programme called "Bent Coppers". A book by Mr McLagan was also published and the Operation Russia investigation was one of the chapters of the book.

Mr McLagan was interviewed by IPCC investigators. He confirmed that both Putnam and his wife had mentioned that ex-Detective Sergeant Davidson was involved in corruption but at no time did they make any reference to any corrupt links between Clifford Norris and Davidson and the Lawrence investigation.

In 2006 Putnam was approached by Mark Daly, a BBC journalist researching the BBC documentary programme, "The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence", In this programme he made allegations regarding Davidson and Clifford Norris

The IPCC also traced the producer of the BBC programme 'Bent Coppers' as Putnam alleged that he had also informed her of the allegations. She does not recall Putnam telling her of the corrupt link between Davidson/Norris and the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation.

Two further people, who Putnam stated he had informed about the allegation, or had requested to be updated about the progress of the investigation, were a Detective Inspector from CIB3 and former Detective Chief Inspector Simon Cousins.

Both deny that Putnam mentioned the Lawrence murder when they met with him at a service station on the M25 on 20 September 2000. A contact sheet for the meeting was obtained as part of the IPCC investigation and this does not include any reference to Stephen Lawrence.

The original police debriefing officers were seen as part of the IPCC investigation. All deny being informed by Putnam of any corrupt link in the Lawrence murder investigation between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

The Police Federation representative for Putnam was also seen and stated he was unaware of any link between Davidson and Norris, as did Putnam's Chief Probation Officer.

However, Putnam did state that he had told members of his family and friends about the relationship between Davidson and Clifford Norris. As part of the IPCC investigation, Mr Putnam's wife, sister, mother, her partner and a family friend were all interviewed and provided statements.

It is clear that Putnam has mentioned the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation and allegations of corruption to them all and he has also told his wife that he had informed officers at the time of his debrief.

Ex-Detective Sergeant Davidson was interviewed by the Operation Russia team in September 1998 following disclosures made by Neil Putnam in his debriefing sessions. There were three specific allegations against Davidson:

- The disposal of two stolen watches given to him by Putnam
- The handling of stolen electrical equipment following the theft and recovery of a lorry owned by a mail order company
- The theft of cocaine from a drug dealer.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) advised that no further action be taken against Davidson due to the lack of corroborative evidence which resulted in a decision not to prosecute rather than a 'public interest' reason as Putnam claimed. Indeed the CPS view was that had there been independent evidence, the likelihood was that Davidson would have been charged.

A former barrister from the CPS, Martin Polaine, who in 1998 was part of a dedicated team of lawyers working alongside the CIB3 officers and who had responsibility for the 'Operation Russia' case on behalf of the CPS, was also seen by IPCC investigators.

He stated he was aware of the fact that John Davidson was under suspicion and was aware he was a member of the Lawrence investigation team. He also states that he was aware that Davidson had an association with Clifford

Norris and when he saw the programme 'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence' he was not surprised at the link being mentioned. However, Mr Polaine was unable to establish the source of the information that linked the two.

RECENT NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

The recent newspaper articles relating to possible corruption in the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation were published as a result of the abandoned retrial at the Old Bailey last October of two former East Dulwich South East Regional Crime Squad Officers, Robert Clark and Chris Drury.

The pre trial hearings heard evidence from Neil Putnam under oath that John Davidson had admitted to him a corrupt relationship with Clifford Norris, the father of David Norris who was convicted in January 2012 of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

An article that appeared in the Independent newspaper written by journalists Michael Gillard and Laurie Flynn repeated these allegations and those which were made in the 2006 BBC Documentary programme 'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence'.

I have not seen anything contained within the Independent newspaper article which did not form part of the 2006 IPCC investigation.

The key allegations featured in the article are detailed below and a response has previously been prepared by the original senior investigator as it relates to the 2006 IPCC investigation.

As part of the review into this investigation, I have been able to look at each of the key allegations detailed in the Independent newspaper and cross reference the allegations to the IPCC report and supporting evidence for the case.

The below summary in my view is an accurate overview of the evidence and key features that formed part of the 2006 IPCC investigation.

Allegation in Press March /April 2012

Key investigator in the original botched hunt for the killers was corrupt and engaged in extensive criminal enterprise, according to the secret Met files. Detective Sergeant John Davidson who interviewed key Lawrence suspects and witnesses within days of the stabbing, was a major player in a ring of bent detectives 'operating as a professional organised crime syndicate' according to previously unpublished intelligence reports.

Putnam allegation

Putnam alleged that the MPS did not prosecute Davidson because of his connection with the Lawrence enquiry and it would have been embarrassing to the MPS.

IPCC investigation findings

The IPCC report clearly indicated on page 16 that Davidson had been arrested by the Operation Russia team and a file submitted to the CPS in respect of three allegations

- Handling of stolen watches
- Handling of stolen electrical equipment
- Theft of cocaine.

Davidson retired from the MPS in July 1998. He had been facing a discipline hearing in respect of providing what can be described as a bodyguard service to an Australian businessman, using MPS vehicles and staff, in MPS time. He was pending this hearing for nearly two years but was allowed to retire on ill health.

Martin Polaine who was the CPS barrister on Operation Russia stated that it was the lack of corroboration that prevented Davidson being prosecuted rather than a public interest issue.

Statements were obtained from former Deputy Assistant Commissioners Clark, Woods and Yates which totally refute Putnam's allegation.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

Davidson had corrupt relations with informants, dealt in Class A drugs and 'would deal in all aspects of criminality when the opportunities presented themselves', according to the files written by senior anti-corruption officers.

Putnam

Putnam alleged that when he joined the South East Region Crime Squad at East Dulwich he was handed money on his first day. He also stated, both to the Operation Russia team and Graeme McLagan that an informant by the name of David Norris was giving information to Davidson and Davidson described him as a good little earner.

IPCC Investigation findings

David Norris had a relationship with a woman called Eve Fleckney. Fleckney later became an informant to Operation Russia. She went on to have a relationship with another alleged corrupt officer called Clark who was one of the officers that Putnam gave evidence against. Whilst Fleckney did not make any allegations against Davidson it is clear that Davidson did have a corrupt relationship with David Norris.

In his statement to the IPCC, AC John Yates confirmed that David Norris had a corrupt relationship with the officers at the Regional Crime Squad, based at Dulwich, which is where Davidson was based.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

Davidson is alleged to have admitted that officers had a corrupt relationship with Clifford Norris, the gangster father of murderer

David Norris. A police supergrass recently gave evidence under oath at the Old Bailey that Davidson had told him bent cops 'looked after old man Norris'.

Putnam

Putnam stated in the BBC programme 'The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence' that he had told the officers who had interviewed him whilst he was a residential informant, that Davidson had told him that he had looked after 'Old Man Norris' (he says this is Clifford Norris). Putnam stated that he believed this meant looking after the interests of David Norris who was one of the five suspects for the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Putnam in his 2006 BBC interview and also his interview to the IPCC alleged that he had told his debrief officers and other MPS officers of the link between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

IPCC investigation findings

In 2000, after being released from a term of imprisonment, Putnam was interviewed by Graeme McLagan for Panorama and also a book called 'Bent Coppers'. Putnam made no mention of the Clifford Norris/Davidson link.

Putnam stated that he was told by Davidson when he joined the crime squad that "old man Norris was a good earner and he looked after him". There is clear evidence that David Norris Senior was linked to the Crime Squad at East Dulwich.

In 2001 Putnam was interviewed by the Guardian Newspaper he told them that he assumed "old man Norris" was Clifford Norris

It should be noted that Neil Putnam has continued to maintain since 2006 that there was a corrupt relationship between John Davidson and Clifford Norris. There is evidence to suggest that during the 1980s and 1990s that there was confusion between the identities of David Norris Senior and Clifford Norris by a number of different MPS sources. Indeed David Norris Senior is described in the book 'Bent Coppers' as a 'good littler earner'. Similar words are used by Putnam to describe Clifford Norris in his 2006 interview. Also there is evidence to suggest that David Norris was also referred to as 'Old Man Norris'.

The IPCC investigation was given access to the Operation Russia files where we recovered the debriefing books used during Putnam's detention. There is no reference to the Davidson/Norris link being mentioned. The three debriefing officers were all interviewed and denied ever being told by Putnam of the alleged link.

The system for dealing with residential informants that was imposed by CIB3 led to each of the informants being interviewed by three separate officers and there were sterile corridors to ensure that the different teams were never aware of the information coming from a different informant. Therefore it would have been very difficult for any one team

to suppress information or intelligence that they had received, as they would not have known the bigger picture.

A number of officers on the Witness Protection Unit who looked after Putnam were also seen and again they denied ever being told by Putnam of the link.

After his release from prison in 2000 Putnam met a Detective Inspector and DCI Cousins at a service station on the M25. Putnam alleges he asked the two officers what was happening about the Norris/Davidson link.

Both officers were seen and state there was no such conversation. DCI Cousins made a note of the meeting and this has been seen and does not contain any reference to Davidson/Norris. (DCI Cousins is now Senior Investigator Simon Cousins at the IPCC).

Other officers who were alleged to have been told of the connection were seen. This included Putnam's Police Federation representative. There was no supporting evidence.

During his interview with the IPCC, Neil Putnam stated that he had also informed his family about the allegations. His mother, ex-wife and siblings were seen by the IPCC investigators. They did confirm that Putnam had mentioned the Davidson/Norris link but the timing of the disclosure was somewhat vague.

John Yates mentions in his statement that there was confusion in the MPS regarding the link between David and Clifford Norris. As far as the MPS know, there is no familial link.

The IPCC investigation made a request through Davidson's solicitors at Russell Jones & Walker to interview him in relation to the allegations made. Davidson now resides in Menorca and he declined the invitation stating that he relied on his comment post broadcast of the programme in 2006 in which he denied any corrupt practice, and he has later made comments in the media where he has denied any relationship with Clifford Norris.

There have been a number of references to Davidson being corrupt and we know he worked on the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation for the first few weeks. He was criticised for his role in the handling of the informant James Grant. Another officer who worked with Davidson whilst on the murder enquiry was also interviewed by the IPCC. He does not share the view that Davidson tried to derail the murder investigation.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

Anti-corruption officers were aware of the alleged link with Norris during the 1998 Macpherson Inquiry, according to new testimony from the former Crown Prosecutor on the case, but an internal

Met legal memo suggests that the Force feared the claim would get out while it was being sued by the Lawrence family.

IPCC Investigation findings

Martin Polaine was, in 1998, a member of the newly formed CPS Visa Team which dealt specifically with police corruption. He worked closely with CIB3 during Operation Russia. In 2004 Martin Polaine joined the IPCC on secondment from the CPS in order to set up the IPCC Legal Department. As part of the IPCC investigation Martin was interviewed in relation to his recollection of the Operation Russia investigation. At the time of the interview Martin was no longer in the employment of the IPCC. He stated that in 2006 he had seen the TV programme and was not surprised about the allegation of the Norris/Davidson link. He stated that he believed he was told by a member of CIB3. This fact is included in the IPCC report.

A Detective Chief Inspector was the CIB3 link to the CPS Visa Team and met with Martin Polaine almost on a daily basis. He was interviewed and had no knowledge of the alleged relationship between Davidson and Norris and therefore did not support Mr Polaine's recollection.

In order to try and substantiate his recollection Mr Polaine returned to the CPS offices and reviewed his case notes for Operation Russia but could not find any supporting documentation.

During the IPCC investigation a document entitled 'Operation Russia' dated 14 August 2000 was produced by David Hamilton, the former Head of MPS Legal Services. The document contains the following paragraph; "Disclosures relevant to Davidson's contact with the Norris family could have an adverse effect on the Commissioner's position in the ongoing High Court action by Mr and Mrs Lawrence. Part of their claim is based on Misfeasance in Public Office and alleges wrongdoing in relation to dealings between Police and the Norris family".

This document had been produced as a result of the MPS allowing access to MPS files to the reporter Graeme McLagan in respect of his research into the 'Bent Coppers' programme.

It appears that Mr McLagan was aware of the contact between Davidson and other corrupt officers. The following is quoted within a document: *"Graeme McLagan is aware that Davidson was in close contact with John Donald at the time of that officer's arrest for corruption. He is also aware that Davidson was heavily criticised during the Stephen Lawrence investigation. Davidson was the Family Liaison Officer. Historically it is believed that Davidson was a co-handler of David Norris (deceased) who was the uncle of Stephen (sic) [David] Norris suspected of involvement in the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Mr McLagan is also aware of the allegations made by Putnam of the corrupt relationship between Davidson and Peter*

Powell. It is anticipated that Panorama will attempt to show that whilst Davidson was suspected of malpractice, he was allowed to leave the service early”.

David Hamilton and DSU Hibberd were seen as part of the IPCC investigation. The existence of these documents confirms the confusion in relation to the identity of which Norris was being discussed. This particular part of the investigation was uncovered by the IPCC enquiry and was contained within the IPCC report.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

John Yates the former Met Assistant Commissioner who led the investigation into Davidson and his colleagues, can be revealed to have prepared testimony for police corruption proceedings last year, unrelated to Davidson, confirming that ‘there was a huge appetite to prosecute John Davidson who we considered then and still do now to have been a major corrupt player of that era’.

IPCC Investigation findings

There is no doubt that Davidson was identified as a corrupt officer. In 1996 he was under investigation in respect of his dealings with an Australian businessman and in 1998 he was named by Putnam as being a corrupt officer. When Davidson gave evidence at the Macpherson Inquiry he was questioned by Michael Mansfield QC in relation to corrupt practices.

The secretary to the Macpherson Inquiry wrote to the Deputy Commissioner in relation to the suspicion of the corrupt links, however, these have never been conclusively proved.

It was proved that another officer in the MPS did have corrupt links with Clifford Norris. This officer who was referred to as Officer XX in the Inquiry was seen to be in the company of Norris the night before he was due to be arrested by customs for drugs offences. Norris went on the run after the meeting.

It is worth noting that it took a number of years to arrest Norris. One of the officers involved in the arrest, which took place in Sussex, was John Davidson. The arrest was after Davidson’s involvement in the Lawrence murder investigation.

The IPCC investigation actually interviewed two witnesses in the Stephen Lawrence enquiry who were dealt with by Davidson. There was no suggestion made that Davidson had tried to suppress evidence.

In an effort to establish a link with Davidson and Clifford Norris, the intelligence and personal files of a number of former officers were examined. I tried to establish a link between Davidson and the Officer known as XX.

DSI Paul Craig and I also visited Kenneth Noye in prison. Noye was known to have links with a former Commander by the name of Ray Adams, who was strongly suspected of being corrupt. Adams was linked to the Officer known as XX. Not surprisingly, Noye did not provide any evidence to assist our investigation.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

Operation Russia files: John Yates, senior CIB3 officer, targeted Davidson – one of the 14 ‘core nominals’ – ‘detectives whose criminality is extensive and in essence amounts to police officers operating as a professional organised crime syndicate’. (More on corrupt informant/handler relationship, anything criminal etc). October 1998 note – ‘Difficulties/threats’ posed by his investigation – Lawrence enquiry – exposure of ex-DS Davidson as a corrupt officer’. Met declined to comment this week on whether shown to Macpherson.

IPCC Investigation findings

During the IPCC investigation, AC Yates was interviewed and he provided evidence in relation to the manner in which Operation Russia was conducted, and also the manner the MPS updated the Macpherson Inquiry.

Davidson gave evidence on two dates in April 1998 and was recalled in July. In September 1998, Davidson was arrested in respect of allegations of corruption as a result of information provided by Putnam.

The Macpherson Inquiry was updated by the Deputy Commissioner Sir John Stevens in respect of the development. It is clear from correspondence between the MPS and the Macpherson Inquiry that there was a concern of a link between Davidson and the Norris family but despite numerous witnesses being called to give evidence, no link appears to have been established.

I cannot confirm if I was shown any report dated October 1998.

Allegation in Press March/April 2012

Putnam's claims at the Old Bailey trial:

- ***Had provided information about relationship to CIB3 – told it would be provided to Macpherson and he would be called – wasn't***
- ***Met produced 5 notebooks but there were 15 and claims were written down***

IPCC Investigation findings

As previously stated the three officers who formed the debriefing team have all been interviewed and have denied the allegations made by Putnam.

In relation to the notebooks these were recovered from secure storage. There is no reason to doubt that the IPCC were provided with full disclosure.

The Independent newspaper article concludes with quotes from both the Metropolitan Police and IPCC.

A spokesperson for the MPS said “We do not consider that any new or significant information has emerged since the IPCC reached their conclusions in 2007. Should any substantive information arise relating to alleged corruption in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation it would be seriously considered.”

A spokeswoman for the IPCC said “We are aware of Mr Putnam’s claims and were aware of them during our investigation. We are also aware of Mr Polaine’s comment. There is nothing which would change our findings or cause us to look into this matter again – they provide no more to substantiate Mr Putnam’s claims than the information we previously had”.

NEW ALLEGATIONS

A second newspaper article by reporter Vikram Dodd, published in the Guardian newspaper on Friday 16 March 2012, relates to the former Police Commander Ray Adams who was questioned at the Macpherson Inquiry in 1998 about his involvement in police corruption. Some of the allegations against Adams centred on his relationship with a notorious criminal, Kenneth Noye.

At the Macpherson Inquiry the lawyers representing the Lawrence family claimed Noye had a criminal associate Clifford Norris, father of David Norris.

The article goes on to describe how the Macpherson Inquiry was not provided with the intelligence report and findings from the police investigation into Adams which took place before Stephen Lawrence was murdered. The report into Operation Russell ended with no evidence of criminal or misconduct findings against Adams.

The article also describes that a second report, (Operation Othona -a secret four year investigation into corruption into the MPS by the then Commissioner Paul Condon in 1993 that in part featured allegations about Adams’ conduct) was also not disclosed.

The article goes on to describe that at the Macpherson Inquiry allegations were also made against John Davidson, a colleague of Alan Holmes, a former detective who committed suicide on the eve of Adams being interviewed by corruption investigators. Holmes in turn was a close colleague of Adams.

Whilst the IPCC investigation report refers to Adams on page 27, the report correctly summarises the facts that, “There are a number of concerns about the activities of a former Metropolitan Police commander and his link with corruption. Previous investigations have been undertaken and nothing proven against the former officer”.

As part of the IPCC investigation Kenneth Noye was also interviewed in prison in an attempt to establish a proven link between John Davidson and Clifford Norris. Noye did not provide any evidence to assist the investigation.

It is clear that Adams was questioned at length by the Macpherson Inquiry and previous investigations into his activities did not find sufficient evidence to warrant criminal or misconduct proceedings.

Adams himself, according to the Guardian article “was only peripherally involved in the liaison between the police and the Lawrence family during the early stages of the investigation, intervening a week after the murder to sign a letter”.

The Macpherson Inquiry specifically examined allegations of police corruption and collusion in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation, following concerns raised by Mr and Mrs Lawrence.

Commander Adams himself gave evidence on two days to the Inquiry where he faced allegations of corruption and collusion, being cross examined in detail by Counsel acting for the family.

The Macpherson Inquiry, as far as it related to Adams, concluded in Chapter 31 of the report.

Chapter 31 Commander Raymond Adams

31.17 “Whatever may be the suspicions of Mr and Mrs Lawrence’s Legal Team there was never any substantiation of the allegations which were made and which no doubt conditioned the nature of the long cross examination by Mr Mansfield”.

31.18 “As we indicated above it may well be that Mr Adams wishes now that he had not signed the letter. But after all the sound and fury we do not believe that his evidence betrays dishonesty or collusion such as was alleged against him”.

31.19 “Mr Adams was defensive in the witness box. But we have seen nothing in the evidence or in the many personal and intelligence files which we have perused to suggest that Mr Adams was involved in collusion or corruptly involved in efforts to hold back this prosecution. By 4 May 1993 he was off the scene”.

It is not known what intelligence files the Inquiry are referring to above and whether these are the files detailed in the Guardian article.

The Guardian article, as it relates to Commander Adams, did not form part of the IPCC investigation as no allegations against Adams had been made by Neil Putnam.

These are therefore fresh allegations not previously investigated by the IPCC.

SEARCH FOR NEW EVIDENCE

As part of this review, contact was made with Cahal Milmo, Chief Reporter at the Independent newspaper. Mr Milmo was able to confirm that the recent article on corruption allegations in the Lawrence investigation was written by a freelance reporter Michael Gillard, the story arising from the recent acquittal at the retrial of two former Detectives, Clark and Drury, who were convicted of corruption in 2000. At a pre-trial hearing in 2011 Neil Putnam had given evidence on oath against his former colleagues.

Mr Milmo was able to confirm that the Independent newspaper did not have any 'evidence' in the Lawrence case but referred me to speak with the reporter Michael Gillard.

Mr Gillard was contacted on 18 April 2012 to establish if he had any new evidence or information in relation to his article for the Independent newspaper. Following a brief conversation Mr Gillard provided details of his solicitor and asked that a written request be sent to his solicitor Mr Louis Charalambous and he would consider whether or not to respond.

This was done the same day but at the time of writing, no response has been forthcoming from Mr Gillard.

Contact was also made with Mr Vikram Dodd of the Guardian newspaper and on 19 April 2012 a call was received from Ms Zoe Norden a solicitor for the Guardian. She asked that any request be put in writing for Mr Dodd to consider. A letter was sent to Ms Norden on 19 April 2012.

On the 25 April 2012, the IPCC received a response from Ms Phillips, Director of Editorial Legal Services for the Guardian on behalf of Mr Dodd stating that "the MPS were carrying out a review concerning the documentation it holds and that which had been disclosed to the Macpherson Inquiry and the quickest and fullest assistance to your enquiries will come from the MPS".

Contact had already been made with Commander Peter Spindler of the Professional Standards Directorate of the Metropolitan Police Service. His office put me in touch with Detective Chief Inspector Christopher Robinson who had undertaken a similar review of the information contained in the Independent newspaper article. He was able to confirm to me that he had not discovered any new evidence or information that was not raised or investigated previously.

As far as the new allegations raised in the Guardian newspaper in relation to intelligence reports not being disclosed to the Macpherson Inquiry, Commander Spindler was able to confirm that, following a request from the Home Secretary, enquiries were being undertaken by the Metropolitan Police to try and establish exactly what material exists and what had previously been disclosed to the Macpherson Inquiry. Those enquiries were on going at the time of writing this report.

Solicitors acting for Mr and Mrs Lawrence have been able to confirm that they do not have any new evidence or material that could assist this review.

CONCLUSIONS

As a result of recent newspaper articles alleging police corruption in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation I was asked to undertake a review of the 2006 IPCC independent investigation that originally looked into similar claims. The Terms of Reference for this review were:

- To undertake a review of the IPCC 2006 independent investigation which examined the allegations of police corruption in the murder investigation of Stephen Lawrence, made by Neil Putnam.
- The review will examine the allegations made in 2006 and compare them to recent allegations of corruption being made by journalists in various news articles.
- The review will establish if the allegations currently being made have been previously investigated by the IPCC as part of the independent investigation in 2006 and, if so, whether the findings were consistent with the available evidence.
- If the allegations have been previously investigated, establish whether any new evidence or information exists which did not form part of the 2006 investigation.
- If new evidence or information exists which did not form part of the 2006 investigation, detail how this may have effected the conclusions reached and recommend how this may now be addressed.

The review has established that the recent article in the Independent newspaper alleging corruption in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation, contains allegations that were fully investigated by the IPCC in 2006 following claims of corruption that were made during the BBC programme "The Boys Who Killed Stephen Lawrence".

Central to the allegations is the former Detective Neil Putnam who himself was convicted of corruption in 1998 and turned informant.

Putnam claimed that during his debrief sessions with officers from the Metropolitan Police CIB3 branch, he provided details of corruption including between his former Sergeant John Davidson and the father of one of Stephen Lawrence's murderers Clifford Norris, but this was never disclosed to the resulting public inquiry headed by Sir William Macpherson in 1998.

Putnam's claims were central to the IPCC investigation and he was interviewed at length by IPCC investigators in 2006 over his claims.

Debriefing books containing intelligence and evidence provided by Putnam to officers from CIB3 were obtained and shown to him by IPCC investigators. Although Putnam was able to describe the context in which he disclosed to his debriefers the allegations of corruption, including John Davidson and his link with Clifford Norris, no specific entries were found in these books as they related to the Stephen Lawrence investigation, despite signed and dated entries by Putnam being found in relation to Davidson and other corruption matters.

Putnam was unable to account to IPCC investigators why references to the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation are not detailed in the debrief books amongst the entries as they relate to John Davidson which Putnam has signed and dated.

Putnam has claimed that there may have been as many as 15 A4 notebooks although only five were obtained from secure storage at the MPS by the IPCC in 2006.

There is nothing to suggest that additional debrief books exist that the IPCC have not seen or that they have been tampered with in any way.

The relevant detailed entries as they relate to Davidson have been seen by Putnam who agreed in interview that it was on these particular occasions that he told his debriefers about the corrupt link between Davidson and Clifford Norris.

Following his release from prison, Putnam was interviewed at length by a number of investigative journalists including Graeme McLagan for a BBC Panorama programme "Bent Cop". Mr McLagan also wrote a book on police corruption which featured 'Operation Russia'.

In addition, various articles appeared in the Guardian newspaper by reporter Vikram Dodd on police corruption featuring Neil Putnam.

It would appear that at no time before his interview with the Guardian newspaper in 2001 did Putnam mention the allegation of corruption against John Davidson and his link to the Stephen Lawrence enquiry.

It is reasonable to assume that had Putnam informed his debriefers of this corrupt link, he would have informed the journalists making the programme "Bent Copper" and the subsequent book. He had fully cooperated with them

to make programmes and write articles on police corruption and there would have been absolutely no reason for him not to have repeated his allegations in 2000 which would have been seized upon at the time.

In relation to the recent article in the Guardian newspaper concerning former Metropolitan Police Commander Raymond Adams, although mentioned in the IPCC investigation report, Neil Putnam did not make any allegations of corruption into Adams and therefore he did not form part of the IPCC investigation. These are therefore new allegations over the non disclosure of intelligence reports to the Macpherson Inquiry.

The recent claims in the Guardian that secret intelligence files on Adams were withheld from the Macpherson Inquiry are currently being looked into by the Metropolitan Police Service to establish exactly what was disclosed to the Macpherson Inquiry.

It is however clear that corruption and/or collusion in the original Stephen Lawrence murder investigation was a long held belief of Mr and Mrs Lawrence and this formed part of the Macpherson Inquiry.

Adams himself gave evidence at that Inquiry and was vigorously cross examined by Counsel acting for Mr and Mrs Lawrence.

It is not known if the Macpherson Inquiry had sight of intelligence reports from Operation Russia and Othona referred to by the Guardian in relation to Adams' conduct, however these reports found insufficient evidence to warrant criminal or misconduct charges being brought against him.

It is clear that the Macpherson Inquiry did have sight of some intelligence files as reference is made to the Inquiry having perused 'many personal and intelligence files' but as previously stated it is not known exactly what these files were.

Therefore, this review has not been made aware of any new evidence or information in respect of the IPCC 2006 independent investigation into the allegations made by Neil Putnam that would lead to a change in the conclusions reached.

Paul Davies
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Standards and Quality Directorate
8 May 2012