

RESTRICTED (when complete)

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

URN [] [] [] []

Statement of: Mark Christopher HARTLEY

Age if under 18: O'18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation: Detective Constable.

This statement (consisting of page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature:..... (witness) Date: 02/10/2016

I am DC 2448 Mark Christopher Hartley of Lancashire Constabulary, currently seconded to the Awaken, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) investigation team. This team is based within the public protection unit at Blackpool. The role of our team is to investigate concerns and criminal activity relating to the sexual exploitation of young people within the Blackpool and Fylde area. We are a multi-agency team, with police, children's social care workers, health and education working together to effectively minimise risk to young people.

Information was provided to our team which indicated that young females were visiting a sports bar, called Q's on Lytham Road, Blackpool. This information stated that several young females were attending the bar for "lock ins", the serving of alcohol after hours and illegal drugs were being made available. The information also stated that a male called Danny, aged late twenties was the person encouraging this behaviour.

As a result of this information being presented to our team a discussion was undertaken by managers and I was requested to conduct a joint police and children's service inquiry; in order to speak to two young females, aged 17. For the purpose of CSE any young person under 18 years of age is a potential victim of CSE; the definition being,

'Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability'. 1

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/500097/HO_DfE_consultation_on_definition_of_child_sexual_exploitation_-_final.pdf

NB - this definition is currently being reviewed - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/statutory-definition-of-child-sexual-exploitation>

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On 21st September 2016, I visited two females know to the Awaken team called A and B. At the time of visiting the girls I was in company with Lauren Alergant, children's services social worker. During a discussion with A and B; both stated that they had visited "Q's" and also named a separate female called C. All of the females are 17 years of age.

A informed me that she had visited the venue and met with a male called Danny Thompson, who she thought was about 24. She also stated that this person was in charge of the venue and that he had provided her and a friend, C with alcohol. A also disclosed that this male had produced some tablets, which he then crushed and she believed that he had put in her drink. She did not see this, but stated that afterward she felt very strange and ended up in hospital.

As a result of this incident spoken of by A, two police crime reports have been submitted relating to sexual assaults. The suspect is named as Daniel Thompson, b.07/08/1985 of 229 St Annes Road, Blackpool, FY42BL.

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B then produced her mobile telephone and began explaining that this male, Danny had been texting her, even though she did not know how he had got hold of her number. B read out a number of messages, which she believed were from Danny. Contained within the messages were references to "Are you coming for free drinks". This was a persistent message, sent on numerous occasions; I believe B read out the message "free drinks" on at least five separate times. B also indicated that Danny had been particularly keen for her to make contact with C, who is 17 years of age for him and asking her whether C would be coming with them.

B also explained that the messages from Danny were sent at various times of day and night and that she had been ignoring him. She stated that he was messaging her at close to 4am in the morning, asking her if she, A and C were coming to the club. She read out several similar messages, which she indicated were from around this time in the morning.

B did not provide specific times and dates for these messages, although indicated that they had been recent and not long before the date that A and C had been to the club. B was reluctant to engage further with the process, she did however provide the telephone number from which the messages were sent, this being; XXXXXXXXXX.

A and C had both reported the sexual offences, stating that Danny was responsible, although did not wish to pursue formal complaints against him.

Daniel Thomson was visited at Q's venue, Lytham Road at about 15:30 on 21/09/2016 by DC 669 Lee (Awaken CSE team) and me. He was spoken to in regard to the information that had been provided by the females involved. He was not formally cautioned.

He stated that he knew the young females involved, although stated that this was because they had boyfriends, who used the club. He denied serving them alcohol or any other substance. He went onto state that he had not picked them up in his car as they had indicated and that he did not kiss / touch, either of them as per the reported crimes.

THOMSON then stated that he had not been the person to contact the girls, although admitted that it was his phone that had been used. He stated that another male, who he had allowed to use his phone, whilst at the venue must have text them. When challenged over that fact that a number of these calls were made in the early

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hours of the morning, he appeared to be very agitated and unsure, therefore did not make responses.
THOMSON was warned not to have any further contact with the females.

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