



Communities and Local Government Committee

Oral evidence: Jay Report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, HC 648

Tuesday 10 February 2015

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Evidence from witnesses:

Panel 1 (Questions 352-433)

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Members present: Mr Clive Betts (Chair); Bob Blackman; Simon Danczuk; Alec Shelbrooke; and Chris Williamson.

Panel 1 Questions [352-433]

Witnesses: **Michael Hart**, Former Director for Children, Ofsted, and **John Goldup**, Former Deputy Chief Inspector and National Director of Social Care, Ofsted, gave evidence.

Chair: Welcome, everyone, to this, the fourth evidence session of our inquiry into child sexual exploitation, following the Jay Report on Rotherham. To begin with, I ask Members to put on record any interests they may have. I am a Vice-President of the Local Government Association. I also have a close friend, Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards, who is a councillor in Sheffield but was for a period of time a part-time scrutiny officer in Rotherham.

Simon Danczuk: My wife is a councillor, and some of the staff in my constituency office are councillors.

Alec Shelbrooke: My father was a councillor.

Q352 Chair: That is our interests on the record. Just to be clear at the beginning, the Committee is trying to focus on the wider issues of these matters, simply beyond blaming individuals, and trying to look at the culture of the local authority in Rotherham, which seemed to prevent

investigating and combating child sexual exploitation. It will also focus on whether Rotherham is an outlier, or is representative of a wider problem of child sexual exploitation across the country, and, more specifically today, it will focus on the operation and impact of the Ofsted inspection regime within Rotherham and in other authorities as well. To begin with, therefore, could you both confirm who you are and the post you held in Ofsted with the dates, and also the basis on which you are here today speaking?

Michael Hart: I am Michael Hart. I was the Director for Children at Ofsted from June 2007 to December 2008. If I go on a bit longer in terms of background, the dates are particularly relevant because, in April 2007, Ofsted had taken over responsibility for the inspection of social care. Services had transferred from the Commission for Social Care Inspection. They also took over at the same time responsibility for the inspection of CAFCASS, which is the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, and also the Office of the Children's Rights Director. All of those transferred in April 2007, and I was appointed in June of that year to head up a new directorate that brought together some of the services that were already in Ofsted, specifically those for the regulation and inspection of early years and childcare, including all child-minders and all provision for early years or childcare, with the Commission for Social Care Inspection, also CAFCASS and the Office of the Children's Rights Director. All of that was brought together.

As far as the social care element was concerned, it covered the regulation and inspection of all children's homes, fostering services, fostering agencies, adoption services, residential care schools, and residential special schools. It also had the oversight of Ofsted's responses to serious case reviews, which they assessed. All of that sat within the directorate that I was responsible for, and one or two other aspects of social care. What it did not cover was the overall inspection of local authorities, which already sat within a different part of Ofsted at the time and continued to be the responsibility of another directorate. I am sorry that was a rather long answer, but it just gives a little bit of context of the areas that I was responsible for.

Q353 Chair: From being invited here, it took you two months to recognise that you were not responsible. You were invited to come to the Committee, and it took you two months to decide to inform us that you were not really responsible for the issues we were inquiring into.

Michael Hart: It was only when I started looking into what you were focusing in on—

Chair: It is pretty obvious what we are focusing in on, is it not?

Michael Hart: It was only when I began looking at paperwork. From my point of view, initially I could not think of anything that I could contribute to you. We are talking about six, seven or eight years ago, and my memory going back is that I knew very little that I could think of that related in any way to Rotherham, or anything—

Chair: We will see when we get to some of the specific questions. Mr Goldup.

John Goldup: My name is John Goldup. You asked about posts in Ofsted. I joined Ofsted in September 2009 as Director of Social Care Development, which meant that I was responsible for the development of Ofsted's policy and approach to inspection in social care across the board. I became National Director for Development and Strategy, which gave me a lead role in developing Ofsted's approach to inspection across the whole range of its work. In January 2012, when Sir Michael Wilshaw came to Ofsted as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, I was appointed Deputy Chief Inspector. In April 2012, I became responsible for the direct delivery of inspection and the management of the social care inspection workforce, which had previously sat elsewhere.

You asked about the capacity in which I am here. I am clearly here because I have held a senior position in Ofsted during some of the period under question. I am clearly not giving evidence on behalf of Ofsted. I clearly cannot speak on behalf of Ofsted. However, I hope I can be as frank and open as possible with the Committee about the work I did do and the work I was involved with.

Q354 Chair: That would be very helpful if you can be, obviously. Let us begin with the last session we had, when Debbie Jones, currently responsible at Ofsted for these matters, was pressed very hard following Professor Jay's comments that the children of Rotherham had been failed to some extent by Ofsted's inspections, and their failure to identify issues to do with child sexual exploitation. It took an awfully long time for Debbie Jones to utter the word "sorry." She kept telling us mistakes were made, but eventually we got the word "sorry" out of her, but not the word "apology". Do you think the children of Rotherham deserve an apology from Ofsted for their failures to deal with these matters adequately over a period of time?

John Goldup: Yes, I do, Chair. I agree entirely with what Sir Michael Wilshaw said to the Education Committee two weeks ago; we did not get it right on child sexual exploitation in Rotherham. He apologised for that, and I apologise for that. The inspection frameworks at the time did not have the focus on child sexual exploitation that they would and should have had if we had known and understood then what we know and understand now. It is clear from reading back over the inspection

reports that we did not appreciate the scale of the child sexual exploitation issue in Rotherham, and we did not scrutinise sufficiently the effectiveness with which it was being responded to.

Having said that, Chair, I would also want to point out to the Committee, in terms of Ofsted's overall role, that when Ofsted first directly went in to do a social care inspection in Rotherham, which was in 2009, it was an Ofsted inspection that for the first time exposed the failings in Rotherham. It said very clearly that Rotherham was a failing authority. I think that says something about the strength and robustness of Ofsted inspection, then and subsequently. However, I absolutely accept that we did not have the focus on child sexual exploitation that we certainly would and should have now.

Q355 Chair: We will come on to the 2009 situation in a minute. My colleague will be asking some questions about that. Last time, Debbie Jones also implied to us that the officers and council in Rotherham ought to have been more questioning of Ofsted's assessments and reviews, and should not just have relied on their findings that the services were "adequate". Does that mean, effectively, the public cannot have confidence and cannot have trust in Ofsted's findings, if councillors and officers have then got to go probing around to see whether they really meant what they said?

John Goldup: No, I do not think it means that, Chair. I do not think that Ofsted, then or now, could take responsibility for how members or officers in a particular council take account of their findings or spin their findings. Ofsted did not say at any point that Rotherham was serving its children well. Yes, it did say in 2010 that there had been sufficient improvement to re-grade it.

Chair: The word "adequate" was used several times throughout this period.

John Goldup: Yes, throughout the period that I was involved, Ofsted made its judgments in social care on a four-point scale, for authorities, children's homes, or whatever it was we were talking about. They were judged "outstanding", "good", "adequate", or they were "inadequate". "Adequate" was the language of Ofsted at the time, across its remits.

Q356 Chair: In terms of Ofsted itself, do you think that anyone really holds them to account? To some extent, it is about individuals, inspectors and judgment. There is no scientific way of identifying necessarily whether there is a problem or not, and whether it is adequate or inadequate. It is about a judgment, at the end of the day. How can that individual judgment be properly held to account by anyone?

John Goldup: There are a number of different levels in that question, if I may say so, Chair. You are absolutely right that inspection

absolutely is a matter of judgment. It is certainly not a scientific process. It is not, of course, a matter of one person's judgment. Certainly, in my time at Ofsted, and I am sure it is true now, there were very careful processes in place to balance different forms of evidence against another. Ofsted would never make a statement based on one piece of evidence. It would always require several pieces of evidence to corroborate any particular statement. There were quality assurance processes in place, then and now. I absolutely agree with you about it not being scientific.

Clearly, if inspectors were to fail in their responsibility to obtain, scrutinise and properly weigh the evidence in front of them and come to an informed and reasoned judgment, that would be a failure in professional competence, and that would be dealt with within those normal processes. As I understand the constitutional position, the overall accountability of Ofsted, which I think is where you started, is the accountability of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to Parliament through the production of the Annual Report and through reporting to the Education Committee.

Q357 Chair: In terms of an individual inspector, if they were found to have been inadequate in their performance, how would anyone know that they had done an inspection and ultimately they were found not to have done it properly?

John Goldup: It would come to light in a number of ways. Clearly, inspectors are performance-managed, and the quality of their work is regularly assessed.

Q358 Chair: Would the public know?

John Goldup: Those inspected are not reluctant to come forward with complaints about the behaviour of individual inspectors, or whether they feel judgments are fair and balanced.

Q359 Chair: Does Ofsted ever say, "And we have found this inspector to be inadequate in their performance"? Is that ever done publicly?

John Goldup: Certainly, Ofsted has revised inspection judgments, but very rarely, I think. It has a process whereby it is prepared to revise inspection judgments following representations from those inspected, and those revisions would be a matter of public record, yes.

Q360 Chair: It might be interesting to find out exactly how many. Mr Hart, have you anything to add to this conversation we have been having?

Michael Hart: I do not think so. I agree with what has just been said. There is nothing different from my time from what has just been described.

Q361 Chair: You join in with offering the apology as well, do you?

Michael Hart: I think, in the sense that everybody who was involved, whether it is from government, inspectors, local government, national organisations, or anybody who may have touched—

Q362 Chair: I am not asking for anybody, because they can answer themselves. I am asking you, about your job, at Ofsted, at the time. Do you think that you and Ofsted from that period of time should be offering an apology to the children of Rotherham?

Michael Hart: It is not a question I think I can answer. At the time my role did not cover anything that—

Q363 Chair: Your staff assisted in this process of inspection, did they not? Staff from your division were involved in the inspection process.

Michael Hart: Not of the local authority.

Chair: Were they not involved at all?

Michael Hart: They were involved with the inspection of certain elements, so they would have inspected the fostering service and the adoption service. There are reports on the website that show the outcome of that. There is no reference in the inspection of fostering, for example, to anything about child sexual exploitation.

Q364 Chair: There was no reference to child sexual exploitation in most of the reports actually, let alone the fostering element of it.

Michael Hart: There is no reference. I have been back to that report. There is no reference to that. There are other concerns that were raised in that report, but nothing specifically.

Q365 Chair: That is the problem. That is the problem we are trying to deal with—why it was not raised.

Michael Hart: I do not know, looking back seven or eight years, why that was or was not raised.

Chair: In the report, it was not raised.

Michael Hart: The issue of child sexual exploitation was not one that was known about, recognised and referred to. As Mr Goldup just said, in the Chief Inspector's Report there are references to child sexual exploitation. I can quote it to you, if you wish. In the 2008 Annual Report, there is reference in the section on safeguarding, under the heading of the social care inspections, to the risks and dangers of child sexual exploitation. Looking back to Rotherham specifically, I cannot see anything, in terms of what is available now, in terms of reports,

that refers to that, in the areas of reports that I would have had access to at the time.

Chair: I think the whole point is it was going on and Ofsted was not recognising it. That is the whole point we are here to consider.

Q366 Alec Shelbrooke: You will have noticed, Mr Goldup, that about a year ago the leader of Rotherham council resigned over the issue, and a new leader was put in place with the specific aim of recognising mistakes had been made and changing what had happened. Last week, Rotherham council was effectively sacked, because nothing had moved forward. Do you agree that, if action is not being taken but it is said that changes will be made, it is the right action to remove and make sure that something is happening that will bring about real change?

John Goldup: Are you asking me whether I agree with the decisions that were made last week about the resignation of the cabinet?

Q367 Alec Shelbrooke: As an overall, non-political question, if people say that changes should be made but do not really seem to have bought into that process, do you believe it is right that, whatever the organisation, people should be removed from that post?

John Goldup: Of course I do, in the circumstances that you are describing. If it is the case, as Louise Casey found, that the political leadership of Rotherham has wholly or very largely fallen into a state of denial of Professor Jay's findings six or seven months on, that is absolutely appalling, and it is absolutely right that they should have resigned, yes.

Q368 Alec Shelbrooke: Would you agree with me that Debbie Jones's failure to offer an apology but just to say that mistakes were made makes her wholly inadequate to take forward the process with Ofsted to investigate this further and understand how this exploitation can be prevented in the future?

John Goldup: I am very sorry. I said at the outset I wanted to be as open and frank with the Committee as I could about the work I have done, and the work I have been involved with. I do not think it is right for me to comment on that question.

Q369 Alec Shelbrooke: You offered an apology immediately. You recognised that things had gone wrong, and you immediately offered an apology. The person currently in charge of sorting this out struggled to offer an apology. That worries me. It worries me that it looks like looking inwards again to protect the troops, rather than trying to make sure that these terrible events do not happen again. What is your professional view on that?

John Goldup: I think, with respect, you are not asking me about my professional view; you are asking me for my view on the fitness of

Debbie Jones for her post. I think that would be a completely inappropriate question for me to answer. I am sorry.

Q370 Bob Blackman: I think you were here when Debbie Jones came before us.

John Goldup: I was here, yes.

Bob Blackman: I am not sure if you were here, Mr Hart. When she came before us, she repeatedly cited the failure of the inspection regime in terms of the frameworks around spotting child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation. Why did Ofsted have a framework that was not picking this up?

John Goldup: I think it is specifically about the failure of the framework to address the issue of child sexual exploitation. The framework addressed the issue of child sexual abuse, which is primarily a thing that happens within children's homes, sadly and tragically. The framework did focus on that.

Q371 Bob Blackman: Would you accept that child sexual exploitation is child abuse?

John Goldup: Absolutely, yes—sorry. Yes, absolutely; I did not mean to query that for one moment. There were two inspection frameworks in place in my time in Ofsted. There was a framework that was in place when I arrived, which had been developed before my time, which ran for three years from 2009 to 2012. It was that framework under which both the unannounced inspections of Rotherham and the inspection of Rotherham in 2010 took place. We introduced a new framework in 2012.

Q372 Bob Blackman: That new framework was national.

John Goldup: Yes. We introduced a new framework for the inspection of child protection arrangements in local authorities.

Q373 Bob Blackman: Why did you introduce the new framework?

John Goldup: I do not want to fall into acronyms, but we used to call it the SLAC programme, which is the Safeguarding and Looked After Children programme.

Bob Blackman: SLAC is probably quite an appropriate acronym.

John Goldup: A point well made, although perhaps we could discuss that later on.

It was a three-year programme, and it came to an end. Clearly, it was necessary to review the approach to inspection. We specifically were very heavily influenced by the recommendations of the Munro Review of child protection, which had reported in mid-2011 and at the time, certainly nationally, was the driver for reform and change in the child

protection system. We introduced a framework very much in response to the recommendations of the Munro Review. That framework, I would now look back and say, was very strongly focused on the effectiveness or otherwise of local authorities' response to the abuse of children and neglect of children primarily within the home, which is, of course, where the vast majority of child abuse takes place.

I would still say, in respect of that focus, that it was a very strong framework. It was a very robust framework. It was certainly widely recognised at the time, not least by Professor Munro herself, as a major step forward for inspection. It was always an interim framework. We described it as an interim framework in the framework itself when it was published. It was interim because by that point I had reached agreement with the other inspectorates involved, which would lead to the introduction of fully multi-agency inspection, which we expected at the time to take place in 2013 and 2014. Certainly, the work we did on multi-agency inspection had a very strong focus on child sexual exploitation, and I strongly believe that is the only way you can effectively inspect for the effectiveness of the response to an issue like that. That was the nature of the framework.

Why did it not have a focus on the issue of child sexual exploitation? I have reflected on that an awful lot, as you can imagine. I think, having lived through that time, that our understanding of child sexual exploitation up to that time was that it was an evil that had surfaced in a small number of very specific places in very specific circumstances. I am not just talking about Ofsted's understanding; I am talking about a national understanding. We did not understand the scale and scope and prevalence of child sexual exploitation up until 2012, I do not think. I do not think we understood that it was something that almost certainly affects thousands of children all around the country, and it could be happening in any local authority.

Q374 Bob Blackman: I think this is one of our other concerns. Within the framework you had, Rotherham is admittedly highlighted, but the framework applied nationally. Therefore, there could be problems in many other places. As for other things—

John Goldup: I do apologise, but could I just very briefly complete what I wanted to say? I am recognising that our understanding of child sexual exploitation up to 2012 was limited.

Bob Blackman: You are saying limited. I would say inadequate—completely inadequate.

John Goldup: That is a choice of words. I accept your choice of words. What I am trying to say is I think, if you look back, there were a series of events in 2012 that fundamentally transformed our, and

indeed society's, understanding of child sexual exploitation. By the end of 2012, we were inspecting for child sexual exploitation in a very different way. We needed to improve; we needed to learn. We did not get it right at the time we inspected Rotherham, and I think I started off my evidence by absolutely acknowledging that.

Q375 Bob Blackman: In Ofsted's words, they were "adequate". Clearly report after report into Rotherham has demonstrated that they were failing, yet Ofsted did not produce anything that produced a sustained improvement. Why is that?

John Goldup: I will take the second part of that question first: that we produced report after report that said they were "adequate" when clearly they were failing. We judged in 2010, and again in 2012, that they had made sufficient improvement to be described as "adequate". That reflects the focus of the framework at the time, in the way I have tried to describe. I am not trying to retrospectively defend judgments that were made two or four years ago. I would point out, because clearly this inquiry has been very much triggered by Professor Jay's report, that Professor Jay also said that from 2010 on there were many improvements in Rotherham. She says "many improvements" at one point. She says "marked improvements" at another. I am also aware that Louise Casey has described those comments as heavily caveated. I would agree with that, and I think Ofsted's comments were heavily caveated. I am not entirely sure that it is right to say that the judgments Ofsted made at the time were wholly wrong. They were certainly incomplete, because they did not look at an issue that we now know they should have looked at very closely. That is my view on it.

Your other question was why that has not produced improvement, I think. In 2010 and 2012, Ofsted found very significant weaknesses. Ofsted did not say, "Rotherham is serving its children well." Ofsted found very significant weaknesses. The responsibility for acting and addressing those weaknesses is clearly with members and officers in the local authority concerned.

Q376 Bob Blackman: Absolutely. I would not depart from that. In December 2009, following the Ofsted report then, the Minister put the children's safeguarding services into intervention. It was clear that there were concerns then, although it was not mentioned in any Ofsted report, about child sexual exploitation. There were concerns then that this was going on. Clearly, Professor Jay's report says this was going on, but there was no mention of it in Ofsted's reports. Why is that?

John Goldup: By that time, there had only been one Ofsted inspection of Rotherham, and that was the two-day unannounced inspection of what were called contact referral and assessment arrangements, which

I think happened in August 2009. The inspection arrangements at the time, which had been put in place just before my arrival in 2009, had two parts. Every local authority, every year, had two-day unannounced inspections of those contact referral and assessment arrangements, which basically focused on the front door. It focused on the effectiveness of the arrangements in place at the point where concerns were first brought to the attention of children's services, the assessment, the referral, the quality of assessment, and the quality of initial work, etc. It was very narrowly focused.

The other element was a much more in-depth two-week inspection of the safeguarding and looked-after children arrangements in a local authority. In December 2009, when the Minister placed Rotherham in intervention, Rotherham had only had the very narrowly focused two-day inspection. Why did that not pick up issues of child sexual exploitation? I can only surmise that it was because that two inspectors working over two days did not see cases of child sexual exploitation.

Q377 Bob Blackman: How many other authorities were placed in intervention?

John Goldup: I cannot tell you that offhand. There were a significant number.

Q378 Bob Blackman: Very few. Were there a significant number?

John Goldup: I believe so. I cannot tell you for 2009, 2010 or 2011, but I believe it is the case at the moment that there are 13 local authorities in intervention. I do not want to trespass into territory I am not really able to give first-hand evidence about, but I think it is also the case, having been in Ofsted from 2009, that initially in 2010 there was an element of a political view that the Government regime had been overly heavy-handed, and there was a wish to rethink the readiness or otherwise of Ministers to put authorities in intervention.

Q379 Bob Blackman: Rotherham came out of intervention, and there were recommendations from Ofsted that that should happen.

John Goldup: No.

Q380 Bob Blackman: What evidence did you have, then, that there had been this improvement in Rotherham to allow them to come out of intervention?

John Goldup: The issues of what evidence we found to make our judgment in, I think, July 2010, and what evidence the Minister relied on in January 2011 to decide to take Rotherham out of intervention are

separate questions. The decisions to place local authorities in intervention, and decisions to take local authorities out of intervention are entirely decisions for Ministers to take. I can only speak for circumstances at the time, but I do not believe the situation has changed. Ofsted is not involved in that process.

Q381 Bob Blackman: That is fine, but are you saying that Ofsted provided advice and assistance to the Minister to make this decision to take it out of intervention?

John Goldup: No, I am not saying that. I am saying Ofsted produced its inspection report. Ofsted was not involved in a process of advising Ministers as to whether that was sufficient to take Rotherham out of intervention.

Q382 Bob Blackman: Surely that Ofsted report showed an improvement. There was still no mention of child sexual exploitation.

John Goldup: I have attempted to describe why I think that was the case. The Ofsted report, based on the framework under which it was inspected at the time, which was the framework that had been in place since early 2009, said that sufficient improvement had been made to re-grade the authority as “adequate”, although significant weaknesses remained. That judgment, made at the time, appears to be very similar to the judgment that Professor Jay made retrospectively, when she said there were many improvements over the last four years, and marked improvements in, for example, risk assessment from 2010 onwards.

Q383 Bob Blackman: In your opinion, then, in December 2010, your report from Ofsted demonstrated persistent weaknesses, inadequacies in the quality of planning, reviews and recording, and—I think this is the most damning of all—failure to hear the views of the children at child protection conferences. All of those were deemed inadequate. From that perspective, that is in the report, but still the decision was taken to lift this authority out of intervention. It beggars belief. Surely from an Ofsted perspective you can see that there are really serious problems here, but nothing was done about it.

John Goldup: Ofsted said in its report, of which you have quoted part, that there were serious problems there. The decisions that those weaknesses were not sufficiently serious to keep the authority in intervention were not decisions that I was involved with in any way, shape or form. They were not decisions that Ofsted was involved with in any way, shape or form. They were decisions made by the Minister and the Department for Education.

Q384 Bob Blackman: Surely you have a responsibility as Ofsted, the inspecting authority, to be flagging up, saying, “There are serious

problems here. You have still much work to be done.” Are you saying that no action was taken by Ofsted to say to Ministers, “Look, there is a serious problem here”?

John Goldup: Ofsted did say to Ministers there was a serious problem. There were a number of significant weaknesses that needed to be addressed, and Ofsted said that through the publication of its report. Again, I cannot speak for now, but certainly at the time Ofsted’s view was that it would only make judgments on the basis of the evidence that it found in inspection. It would publish its judgment on that evidence in its inspection report. It was not involved in the process of then giving any further advice to Ministers as to what weight they should place on those inspection reports. That simply was not, and I do not believe is, how the process operated.

Q385 Simon Danczuk: If we cut to the chase, the gist of it is that it has taken the Jay Report and the case inspection to get to the heart of the problem in Rotherham. Why did the inspections by Ofsted fail to get to the truth, do you think?

John Goldup: I can only speak about inspections up to 2012, and obviously there has been a more recent Ofsted inspection of Rotherham, as you know. I have tried to address that. I absolutely recognise that inspection up until the latter part of 2012—and it changed quite significantly in the latter part of 2012—did not have the focus on child sexual exploitation that it would and should have had if we had known and understood then what we know and understand now. That fundamentally is the reason why Ofsted did not identify the continuing issues. It is not so much around whether child sexual exploitation was happening—obviously, at the end of the day, that is the important issue—but what Ofsted would and should have focused on was, “Given that it is happening, how effectively are the local authority and others working together to try to prevent it and disrupt it, to try to protect the children who are being raped and abused, and to offer them ongoing support?”

Q386 Simon Danczuk: What you are saying, John, is that up to 2012, people in Ofsted, at whatever level, just did not realise that the rape of children was going on outside the home. That is generally what you are saying, in a nutshell.

John Goldup: No, I am not saying that we did not realise that it was going on. Obviously, there had been some horrific previous high-profile cases, for example in Derby. Of course we understood that this was, tragically, an experience that children and young people could be exposed to.

Q387 Simon Danczuk: That is right, John. I was a councillor on Blackburn with Darwen Council up to 2000-01, and I distinctly remember

conversations around specifically this model of abuse being committed by these types of perpetrators. That resulted, I think, in Blackburn developing quite a smart approach to dealing with it. You know about the examples in Derby. There are examples in Blackburn. There is no shortage of knowledge about this. We know it from the perpetrators who have been arrested for the rape of children. We know about runaways getting raped. There are lots of examples of perpetrators being prosecuted successfully for sexually abusing children. However, you are claiming here that, within Ofsted, it took up to 2012, which is quite recent, to start thinking that children could easily be attacked and raped outside the home.

John Goldup: What I am saying is that I do not think we were sufficiently aware. I do not think, in a wider society, we were sufficiently aware, and I continue to say that, of the scale and the scope and the prevalence of child sexual exploitation.

Q388 Simon Danczuk: John, I have just given you lots of examples. You guys are paid to be on top of this subject, are you not? The wider public are not. I am not. You guys are. It is your profession to know that this type of abuse goes on: to look at Blackburn in 2000 and think, "This could be being replicated elsewhere in the country"; to think, "Well, it has happened in Derby; it could be happening in other parts of the country. Perhaps we should design a framework that tries to get to the detail of this." However, it took until 2012 to accept that the rape of children might be occurring outside of the home. I do not get it.

John Goldup: I am not saying that. I am absolutely not saying that, if you had asked me in 2012, "Are children raped and abused outside the home?" I would have said "No".

Q389 Simon Danczuk: Why did it take until 2012, then?

John Goldup: I have tried to explain. This is my view, and I believe that many independent witnesses would concur with me, that our understanding of child sexual exploitation was limited. We knew it happened. We knew it was wicked. We knew it was hugely damaging to children. However, it was widely perceived as a localised issue. It was the appalling events that came to light in the Rochdale trial in April 2012. It was the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Runaway and Missing Children and Adults in June 2012. It was the article in *The Times* by Andrew Norfolk in autumn 2012. It was the report of the deputy children's commissioner in November, which estimated that 16,500 children were at risk of child sexual exploitation.

Those things fundamentally transformed our understanding of the scope and the extent and the prevalence of child sexual exploitation. Of course I say with hindsight and looking back we should have been alert to it, but there were many things we were focusing on.

Q390 Simon Danczuk: You have got inspectors going into local authorities, where the culture within the local authority is that the social workers, dealing with the children who your inspectors are speaking to, have a view that the girls are making lifestyle choices. Your inspectors are speaking to social workers, and they do not pick up the fact that social workers are saying that these girls are making lifestyle choices. They do not pick that up.

John Goldup: I do not know whether inspectors looked at cases where that would have come up. I simply do not know that, because I do not have access to the evidence base. I do not know that you are accurate in saying that by 2010, that was something social workers were saying. I do not think that is something that Professor Jay says. It absolutely was a feature of the response of both social services and of the police in an earlier period, and perhaps still is, far more than it should be. Certainly, Professor Jay does talk about the improvements that were made from 2010 onwards. I think Louise Casey, who is very critical, obviously, and I am sure rightly, talks about work undertaken by children's services in 2010 that was exemplary in relation to child sexual exploitation, in relation to the support of the victims of Operation Central.

Q391 Simon Danczuk: John, I want to know about your experience. I do not want to know about Louise Casey's, or Professor Jay's. I want to know about your experience. You have had inspectors that have gone into authorities where the culture in relation to the victims has been wholly wrong, and the inspectors, time and again, have failed to notice that the culture within those local authorities has been one of ignoring vulnerable girls to the point where they were being raped. I am trying to understand from you, from 2009, did your inspectors not feed it up? Did they go in there and not speak to anybody? What happened?

John Goldup: I think you are wrong. You are saying that our inspectors, from 2009, were going to many authorities where that was the prevailing attitude. I do not think that was the case. I do not know which authorities you have in mind. I do not think the evidence is that, by 2010, that was the case in Rotherham, whatever the significant failings continued to be. I think you are making a sweeping assertion you do not have the evidence for.

Simon Danczuk: Everything was fine, then.

John Goldup: With regards to the people who do these inspections, the recently appointed Children's Commissioner in Rotherham has said he has been extremely impressed by their integrity, their transparency and the sound evidence base for their judgments. From my experience, if the people who do those inspections had encountered that attitude from a single social worker, they would have followed that

up like a pit bull in the inspection. They would not have overlooked that and said that was alright.

Simon Danczuk: Really?

John Goldup: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Q392 Simon Danczuk: Why was it not picked up then?

John Goldup: I am saying to you I do not think you have any evidence for your assertion that our inspectors were hearing those attitudes from social workers from 2009 onwards.

Q393 Simon Danczuk: No, I do not think the inspectors were reporting on it. Let me move to another point. What you have said, and the previous Ofsted witness said, is that it was the failure of the frameworks to deal with the sexual exploitation of this kind. That is what you are saying, is it not? They were eventually changed in 2012 when this new phenomenon—

John Goldup: It was not a new phenomenon. I did not say it was a new phenomenon.

Q394 Simon Danczuk: That is when the frameworks were changed. Who designed the failing frameworks?

John Goldup: I am very sorry, but if you are talking about the frameworks that were in place from 2009 onwards, they were developed before I joined Ofsted, and I cannot give you any direct evidence on that question.

Simon Danczuk: We can be supplied with that information.

John Goldup: I am sure Ofsted could supply you with that information. I think, to be fair, that is a question to Ofsted, not a question to me.

Q395 Simon Danczuk: I think you pointed out that there have been more interventions now. 13 are into intervention.

John Goldup: I believe that is the right number.

Simon Danczuk: Why do you think that is? Why has it increased, do you think, John?

John Goldup: I did not say I thought it had increased. What I said was that I cannot tell you how many authorities were in intervention in 2009, 2010 or 2011. I believe it is the case that there are 13 at the moment. I am not aware that that is a significant increase. It is the only figure I can call to mind.

Q396 Simon Danczuk: Michael, I just wanted to turn to your view. I am trying to understand what your role is. I get the impression that you did not play a significant role in designing the frameworks that were used. Is that right?

Michael Hart: That is correct.

Q397 Simon Danczuk: Somebody else within Ofsted did it.

Michael Hart: Yes, that was the responsibility of another section.

Q398 Simon Danczuk: Who was it, Michael?

Michael Hart: It was within the education directorate.

Q399 Simon Danczuk: Who led that team at that time?

Michael Hart: I know who the director was. I cannot remember now who was responsible for the actual design.

Simon Danczuk: Who was the director at that time?

Michael Hart: I have passed the name on already. It is Miriam Rosen, who is coming to appear before you. Just to be clear, when I took up post, the inspection regime that was in place was the joint area review. Rotherham's joint area review had already taken place before social care inspection moved over into Ofsted. It took place under the Commission for Social Care Inspection in 2006, as Professor Jay refers to. While I was in post, there was the completion of the JAR programme and the beginning of formulation of the next round of inspections that replaced, effectively, a large part of the JAR.

Q400 Simon Danczuk: You were at the centre of the organisation at this time. How well placed was Ofsted to make this transition from just a school inspection regime to one involving social care?

Michael Hart: Just to marginally correct you, it was not just education before the transfer, because they already had responsibility for early years and childcare, which I was referring to earlier, which was very substantial. It is worth not downplaying that. That was already nearly 1,000 inspectors working for Ofsted. 30,000 inspections a year took place in early years and childcare. That was a very substantial chunk of the work of Ofsted, which included some safeguarding, obviously, as an element of that.

Q401 Simon Danczuk: Then the responsibilities of the organisation increased even more. Were they in a good place to do that, or not, do you think, at the time, Michael?

Michael Hart: I think it took quite a while. I think it took all of the time that I was there, and beyond—I cannot speak for what happened afterwards—for a change of culture and ethos, from what was, I think you are implying, predominantly an education-focused inspectorate to one that took on a much wider brief. It took most of the time while I was there, in a sense, to settle the social care inspectors into this larger organisation, and, indeed, the other way round as well—for the education part to recognise what was joining them—and to look for the potential joint working across the two.

Q402 Simon Danczuk: That is a really good point. Do you think it was because of this transition that problems might have arisen in inspections in Rotherham and in other places, and that there could have been a failure because of this transition within a larger organisation?

Michael Hart: I think, if you are asking me to give a personal opinion, transition always creates periods where perhaps there are many other priorities that are being sorted out, with a lot of focus on new training. I do not want to say the eye is taken off the ball; that is not the case at all. Inspectors spent a long time on training to learn how things would be carried out within the new organisation. There must, I imagine, before the inspectors transferred, have been quite a period of preparation by those inspectors, where many other things would be on their minds apart from, obviously, their professional concerns about inspection. There certainly was a lot of focus on that.

There was a lot of focus on communication, including communication to the wider public and communication to all of those being inspected. That was a very high priority at the time. There were many other aspects that really took centre stage in getting this new organisation that was, in many senses, quite different from what had been there previously.

Q403 Simon Danczuk: Would inspectors have been trained to spot child sexual exploitation at the time, Michael, do you think?

Michael Hart: They would.

Simon Danczuk: They would, would they?

Michael Hart: The social care inspectors would. Can I quote, very briefly, something from the Chief Inspector's Report at the end of 2008? The Annual Report of Ofsted had a section in part of the report that I would have been responsible for—the regulation and inspection of social care, looking at residential care and looking at children's homes, etc.—where it said that safeguarding was inadequate in 7% of all the services that we were inspecting at the time. It then lists a number of common failings, and at the end says failings included "insufficient guidance to staff on effective safeguarding procedures. Where staff don't have suitable guidance, this is usually because of insufficient understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures". It then continues, "Consequently, necessary action may not be taken to reduce the risk to children of sexual exploitation and drug or alcohol misuse." I only quote that to show you this was not a completely new concept that had not been considered.

Q404 Simon Danczuk: That is not what John says. John said it was a relatively new phenomenon up to 2012.

Michael Hart: No, I do not think there is a difference between us. Of course it was known about. It is referred to in the Rotherham JAR in 2006. It is an issue that is mentioned there. It is not new, but it was not of the high profile or understanding of the extent or the impact that clearly is very evident from the Jay report and everything that has been in the press, etc.

Q405 Simon Danczuk: Debbie Jones told us Ofsted has sacked people where it has been proven that inspectors have got it wrong. How many inspectors have you ever sacked, Michael, approximately?

Michael Hart: I do not believe that while I was there we sacked anyone.

Q406 Simon Danczuk: You have never sacked any inspectors. John, how many inspectors have you sacked?

John Goldup: As I said at the beginning, I was not responsible for the management of the social care inspection workforce until April 2012, so for the majority of time I was there. I did not sack any inspectors between April 2012 and the point I left.

Simon Danczuk: You have never sacked any inspectors.

John Goldup: I did not sack any inspectors between April 2012, when that would have become part of my role, and the point that I left.

Q407 Simon Danczuk: Neither of you have sacked inspectors in relation to this type of issue.

John Goldup: I have just answered the question, I think.

Q408 Alec Shelbrooke: Ofsted was set up effectively for the public to have faith that the institutions were being properly overseen. Would you agree with that?

John Goldup: Of course that is an important part. Of course, Ofsted originally was set up, back in 1990, to monitor the quality standards and to help to secure improvements in those standards. Yes, absolutely.

Q409 Alec Shelbrooke: What I am troubled by, on the answers that have been given so far, is that I am not hearing answers coming through where the public can start to regain faith in the inspection regime. That worries me greatly, because, going back to your previous answer, you are effectively trying to blame the Minister for decisions taken which would have been based on the evidence that Ofsted put towards them. A member of the public looking in on this Committee today will simply draw a conclusion that Ofsted thinks it knows best and tries to pass the buck. What can Ofsted do to address this exceptionally worrying concern that effectively is being sent out subliminally as a message from this Committee today?

John Goldup: I think it is very unfortunate, if the Committee are sending out that message. I must correct you; I did not blame the Minister for anything. I simply made a factual statement about where decisions about placing local authorities in intervention are made.

Q410 Alec Shelbrooke: John, with respect, you said that Ofsted sent a report to the Minister that had not said that things had made any difference, and the Minister decided to lift the inquiry.

John Goldup: No, I did not. I did not say that. I said that Ofsted published a report of its inspection. It was clear about the improvements that it felt had been made. It was clear about the significant weaknesses that remained. It was not Ofsted that then relied on that report and the other sources of information that would have been drawn on, because obviously there was a delay of some months while other information was considered. It was simply not Ofsted that made the decision. It was not Ofsted's role. I am not blaming anybody.

On your question about the confidence of the public, as I say, it is very unfortunate if the proceedings of the Committee are giving the public that impression. Inspection is not scientific. I do not think inspection is perfect; I do not think inspection will ever be perfect. Inspection needs to continue to learn; inspection needs to continue to improve. I hope that process has continued. I have absolutely accepted the limitations and the failures of the framework to address and deal with the issue of child sexual exploitation. I have absolutely accepted that. I would say that the inspection frameworks that were in place in Ofsted for the inspection of local authorities and increasingly for the inspection of other services such as children's homes, which I gave a great deal of priority, for all the limitation that I have accepted, nevertheless were the most robust and most rigorous form of inspection that social care services had ever been subject to. Indeed the Rotherham experience in 2009 helps to demonstrate that. The fact that between a third and a fifth of local authorities at any one time were found to be failing under that inspection regime also demonstrates that.

We did not get everything right. I certainly have never, either when I was at Ofsted or now, gone on a platform and said, "Ofsted knows best." I have always talked about what Ofsted needs to continue to learn from and to improve. I think that inspection is, on the whole, delivered by people of great expertise, and certainly considerable integrity, as the most recent comments from the Children's Commissioner in Rotherham have pointed out. It is not for me to speak about what confidence the public can have in Ofsted today, because I am not part of it.

Q411 Alec Shelbrooke: Fair enough, John. I would make the point that Simon has quite rightly highlighted the fact there was a culture within Rotherham that said this was a lifestyle choice for these girls, and that it was overlooked, and that is what the reports have highlighted. Is there no emotional intelligence training on inspectors to try to detect from people whether, to be honest, there is a culture that is making those things come out?

What people will find incredulous today is that, until 2012, none of this had really gone on before. It is almost as if we were living in the 1950s. I know there is the odd political party around who would like us to think we would like to live in the 1950s, but we are not living in the 1950s. It is fairly obvious that this sort of activity had been taking place. Why did the inspectors not pick up on the emotional intelligence of the people who, when interviewed, were making the comments, which were not then further investigated? That may just be something that needs to be changed. This is not pinning you down, and saying it is a failure. Is it something that needs to be looked at, in terms of the training package for inspectors?

John Goldup: I am sure, whenever we learn from weaknesses or limitations in inspection, of course that has got to feed into policy and of course that has got to feed into training. You have referred to Mr Danczuk's comments and the points Mr Danczuk made. I think I have made the point that, in terms of what Ofsted would have found at the point when Ofsted was inspecting, I am not sure if there is evidence for the assertion that those were the attitudes of staff. Even in an authority with serious weaknesses, there was work being done in 2010 with the victims of child sexual exploitation as part of Operation Central, which involved these social workers who are supposed to have had these kinds of attitudes and which I think the Louise Casey report describes as exemplary.

You have got to be very careful about what period you are talking about in terms of when and what evidence you are relying on. Yes, learning from failure, learning from weakness, and learning from things we have been proven not to have got right has got to be an absolutely crucial driver, both for the improvement of inspection and for the training of inspectors. I entirely agree with that.

Q412 Chair: Surely that misses the point, Mr Goldup, does it not? I may be wrong in my recollection, but Operation Central was a success. Was it not a success because the children involved, through Risky Business to a large extent, where they felt comfortable talking to people about their experiences and their problems, were crucially involved in the collecting of that evidence to form the basis for a successful prosecution?

John Goldup: Yes.

Q413 Chair: The next time concerns were raised, the social workers took the thing over, and Risky Business itself was eventually pulled into the centre, into the social work department, and all that trust from the children, and all that ability to come forward with evidence and feel trusted and valued, dissipated. Why was that not picked up in the inspections?

John Goldup: Why was that not picked up?

Chair: Yes. That was key. The thing that comes across to me is that Ofsted ticks boxes. Fine. It does not get into what is really happening, and that is what Mr Danczuk was trying to explore: what is really happening in an authority, where issues are there and are not being picked up at all and dealt with properly.

John Goldup: There may be many things that inspection does not get right, but I have been with these inspectors on inspections. They are spending two weeks in an authority, frequently working 18-hour days, meeting with children and young people, reviewing large numbers of individual cases to find out what has happened to them individually. The notion that they are sitting there ticking boxes, I am sorry, is just wrong.

Q414 Chair: You asked where it was in Professor Jay's report; it was very clearly in Professor Jay's report. She was saying this issue was going on. Children were talking about it; they were talking to people in Risky Business and other people in the voluntary sector. Somewhere between that conversation and the authorities doing anything, blockages occurred. Whether it was a blockage at the initial social work level, or at senior social workers, or at managers, or at councillors, somewhere in that system, this information got stopped and did not get acted upon. Is that not part of Ofsted's job—to identify that as a problem?

John Goldup: Of course it is. Professor Jay's report covers a period from 1997 to 2013. I am talking about the period from late September 2012.

Q415 Chair: It was still going on, was it not?

John Goldup: Child sexual exploitation was still going on. Tragically, I am quite sure that child sexual exploitation is still going on. What inspection would have focused on was how effectively or otherwise it was being dealt with. It did not focus on that; I am accepting that.

Q416 Chair: Even though it is quoted in Ofsted's own report, I am told, in 2010: "Services are currently delivered by a partnership between the police and the voluntary sector, which has a good understanding of the needs of children who go missing and of the parallel processes that may need to be considered, for example sexual exploitation." It is there

in Ofsted's report. This is a potential issue. The voluntary sector, Risky Business, was there to be talked to. Did inspectors go and talk to them? Apparently not.

John Goldup: I do not know whether they did or not. I cannot tell you that at this remove. I do not have access to that evidence base, I am afraid.

Q417 Chris Williamson: Did you triangulate your judgment that Rotherham was "adequate" with other inspection regimes, such as Police, Probation, Health and so on?

John Goldup: No, I do not think that would have been a process. For a start, not all inspectorates made judgments. There were and, I think, are inspectorates whose preferred method is, if you like, to tell a story, but they do not commit themselves to judgments. I do not know what relevant inspections had taken place in Rotherham at that time by other inspectorates. I do not know what Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary had done. I am not sure what the Care Quality Commission had done. The Care Quality Commission, which was, and is, the inspector of health services, at the time had a very limited inspection role.

Q418 Chris Williamson: How closely, then, do you work with other inspection regimes? Do you work with them at all?

John Goldup: I would say, during the majority of my time in Ofsted, we did not work sufficiently with them, and we did not work closely enough with them. There were huge challenges to it, because the inspectorates are so different, in terms of their approach, their methodology, their legal basis, the judgments they make or do not make, and so forth. Professor Munro, when she reported in 2011, said that what ought to be in place was the inspectorates coming together to deliver single multi-agency inspections. She said that was what ought to be in place, but it was probably unachievable.

My work in my last year in Ofsted was very heavily around that. The reason the 2012 framework was an interim framework was because by that time I had secured agreement with the other inspectorates to undertake a single multi-agency inspection of child protection. We were piloting that framework at the end of 2012, and that framework had a very strong focus on child sexual exploitation, because, as I have said, I strongly believe that ultimately that is the only way forward. It is how agencies work together, not looking at agencies within their individual silos.

Q419 Chris Williamson: There is a significant issue with silo mentalities, then, at the moment, would you suggest?

John Goldup: I am not saying we did not communicate and engage, but in terms of really sharing information on the ground and working together on the ground, there was very limited joint working between the inspectorates. I did develop some joint inspection, for example with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons in secure training centres, which was the first time we had managed to do that. The key thing I was working on at the point I left was bringing in single multi-agency inspection, which we had piloted by the end of 2012. That was the point at which I moved on.

Q420 Chris Williamson: Are you saying then you have had non-Ofsted inspectors involved to provide challenge and scrutiny of the inspection that Ofsted are responsible for? Has that happened already? Do you think bringing in non-Ofsted inspectors would be a good idea?

John Goldup: What would be a good idea would be for all the inspectorates to come together as a single team and jointly inspect how well children are protected in an area, and make a joint single judgment on it. That is what I think would be a good idea. That is what I was moving forward at the point I left Ofsted.

Q421 Chris Williamson: I think you have said that there was an issue with silos. Debbie Jones told us that Ofsted was undertaking what appeared to be integrated inspection pilots with the Care Quality Commission, HMI Constabulary, HMI Probation and, where appropriate, HMI Prisons. What do you say to that?

John Goldup: What has happened since I left Ofsted in early 2013 is something I can only comment on the basis of what is public knowledge, obviously.

Q422 Chris Williamson: Was there a similar sort of thing during your time?

John Goldup: I think what happened was I was leading the development and the piloting of integrated multi-agency inspection, and we piloted that at the end of 2012. After I left, Ofsted decided not to pursue that at that point, and you would have to ask Ofsted why it made that decision. As I understand it, and I stand subject to correction, but I am not speaking for Ofsted, Ofsted has continued to inspect local authorities on a single-agency basis. They have consulted on proposals to introduce a different form of multi-agency inspection from next year, which, as I understand it, is not the proposal that I was taking forward, which was a single inspection bringing the inspectorates together in a single team, but is a proposal for the different inspectorates to be on site at the same time, each doing their own inspection of their own agency, and then bringing the results together. That is what Debbie was saying, I think. They have been consulting on

that. They have been piloting it. They have yet to decide on the way forward.

My own personal view is that five different inspections going on at the same time is not the best way forward, and that the best way forward is to bring the inspectorates together in a single multi-agency inspection team to do a single integrated inspection. That was what I was working on when I was at Ofsted.

Q423 Chris Williamson: What would you say about that, Mr Hart? Was there similar joint working going on during your period there?

Michael Hart: The priority for me was making sure that the teams within Ofsted worked together. That in itself was bringing together teams that previously would have been in different inspectorates. That was my priority: the social care team working with education, working with childcare, and looking for the common points. At the same time, there were the JAR inspections going on. Looking back, they had nine inspectorates that contributed to JARs, plus the Audit Commission. There was an attempt at that stage to bring all the inspectorates together. Some of them were clearly much more the leads than the others. In terms of inspection teams, it was basically made up of two or three of the inspectorates plus the Audit Commission.

Q424 Chris Williamson: I think Mr Goldup conceded that there was an issue with silos, and of that potentially getting in the way. Would you agree with that, in terms of an effective inspection regime?

Michael Hart: One of our priorities was to try to break down those silos.

Q425 Chris Williamson: You acknowledge that silos were a problem. Would you say that Ofsted was hamstrung by those silos, and that they got in the way, where each different silo was thinking another silo would be taking responsibility for uncovering this issue?

Michael Hart: No. I was trying to say that, as part of the role that I was involved with, it was very much trying to break that down within Ofsted so that the newly arrived social care inspectors worked very closely, as much as was possible within the wide range of work that they had to get on with in the normal day-to-day—

Q426 Chris Williamson: Why were you breaking it down, then? Presumably you thought it was a problem. If it was working well, there would not be a need to break it down. Why did you want to break down the silos?

Michael Hart: It came from different directions. Education inspectors were mainly concerned initially on areas of achievement. They began to recognise that areas such as safeguarding were equally important. There was lots of training that went on to make sure that they also took responsibility for that within their inspection regimes. Similarly, the social care inspectors needed to understand the importance that education could play.

Q427 Chris Williamson: That seems to point, does it not, to that being part of the problem, or maybe that it was a major reason why this exploitation went unnoticed and unreported for so long by Ofsted? There was this silo regime going on. People were not speaking properly to each other.

Michael Hart: What I am trying to say is that, during that period, much of the focus was on breaking that down—to open up that communication to make everybody realise that there was joint responsibility for many of those issues.

Q428 Chris Williamson: Would you concede that was a major problem, though? Is that what you are saying?

Michael Hart: What I am saying is that, before the inspectors moved from the Commission for Social Care Inspection, they would have had a separate main focus. In coming together into one organisation, Ofsted's intention was to try to break down those differences.

Q429 Chris Williamson: By doing that, do you think going forward this sort of exploitation will not go unreported and will not be able to slip under the radar, as it were, in the way in which it has done hitherto?

Michael Hart: All I am doing is expressing a personal view here, in that, if more inspectors are aware of the issue, their antennae might be in place to pick up any signals and signs that could be passed on to whoever might be more the experts.

Q430 Chair: We heard that clearly child sexual exploitation was going on in Rotherham and was not being picked up in inspections. There is also recognition that child sexual exploitation is probably much wider spread than had been appreciated, so it is going on in other areas as well, presumably not picked up by Ofsted inspections. Are we therefore likely to get revelations in other authorities, in your view, similar to those that have come out in Rotherham, because of Professor Jay's report?

John Goldup: I am not sure that I can answer that question. I heard Debbie say that this is something that Ofsted does now focus on very closely. It is absolutely right to say that we do now understand that the evil of child sexual exploitation is something that can be happening, and is probably happening on some scale, because it covers a vast

range of things, from the individual grooming of individual children to the kind of organised criminal activity that we have seen in other places. I think we do now understand that that may well be happening in any community in the country, and that all local authorities and all partnerships need to be very alert to it, and inspection needs to be very alert to it.

Q431 Chair: I think it is true so far that Ofsted has only identified Rotherham after the Jay report as being an area where it is happening. It has not identified any other authority in its inspections yet.

John Goldup: Again, I could not tell you that. What I can say, though, for example, in terms of my own experience, is that if you compare the inspection of Rotherham in, I think, the summer of 2012—which we have talked about and I absolutely accept failed to pick up things it should have picked up—with the inspection of Rochdale later that year, that Rochdale inspection had a very explicit focus on child sexual exploitation and the effectiveness or otherwise with which it was being responded to. There was a lot of learning going on, and I am sure that learning has continued.

Q432 Chair: One of the things that has been said specifically about Rotherham, and it is coming out in both the Jay report and Louise Casey's report, is the culture. "Macho culture" and "bullying culture" are the words that are being used. Can inspections pick up that sort of climate in an authority? It may be that Rotherham is particular in that respect, or may be particular along with some other authorities in that respect.

John Goldup: It is all a question of degree. Having been an officer in local government for many years, I do not think elements of that are entirely unique to Rotherham. Can inspection pick that up? I think it can, but it will not necessarily. Certainly, social care inspection can, because what social care inspection, I think, is focused on is the outcomes for children and the impact on children. It was focused on it then, and I think it is now. If, for example, a social worker says to an inspector, "I know that would be the right thing to do for this child, but I cannot do it because members would not like it," that would undoubtedly get picked up, and that would get followed up extremely vigorously.

However, the broader context of how members behave, and the political culture, is not necessarily something that would get picked up in inspection as it currently is, because the focus of inspection is so much on the effectiveness of the services provided to individual children and the difference or otherwise that intervention has made to their lives. I do not think a two-week, or even a four-week, as it is now, I believe, Ofsted inspection will necessarily pick that up.

Q433 Chair: Finally, just for both of you, do you think there is a case for mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse, backed by criminal sanctions?

John Goldup: Yes.

Chair: We cannot record nods, Mr Hart. Are you agreeing as well, Mr Hart?

Michael Hart: Yes. I am sorry. I was agreeing as well.

Chair: Thank you both for coming to give evidence to us today. We will obviously reflect on the evidence we have had. On behalf of the Committee, may I just say one thing? We appreciate the clear and unequivocal apology that was given at the beginning. I think that was helpful, and we do appreciate that. Thank you very much to you both for coming.