

Judicial Communications Office

22 March 2022

LEGACY INQUEST REVIEW

Press Release

The Presiding Coroner, Mr Justice Humphreys, has issued this statement following his reviews on 28 February 2022 and 1 March 2022 of legacy related inquests. He has identified a number of inquests which will be progressed by the Legacy Inquest Unit in Year 3 of the Five Year Plan:

“On 28 February and 1 March 2022 I conducted reviews of all legacy inquests where a Coroner has not yet been appointed. I wish to thank the representatives of the families and the relevant agencies for both their written and oral submissions.

As work continues on the Year 1 and 2 cases, it is important that I identify at this stage, cases that will proceed in Year 3 to allow the necessary preparatory work to commence.

The current state of readiness has been the main factor in determining which inquests can be listed in Year 3. I have however taken into account all submissions made to me during the review process. With that in mind, I have identified the following as suitable for listing in Year 3:

1. Kevin McKearney & John McKearney and Charles Fox & Teresa Fox (linked);
2. Patrick Duffy;
3. Francis Bradley;
4. Alexander Patterson;
5. Clonoe incident – Patrick Vincent, Sean O’Farrell, Peter Clancy & Kevin O’Donnell;

Judicial Communications Office

6. Gerard Slane & Terence McDaid (linked);
7. Joseph Campbell;
8. Raymond McCord;
9. Liam Paul Thompson.

The parties will be notified when Coroners have been appointed in these inquests and they will now be case managed to hearing.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Information about legacy inquests can be found on the JudiciaryNI website (<https://judiciaryni.uk/legacy-inquests>)
2. An inquest is an inquiry into the circumstances of a death. The purpose of the inquest is to find out who the deceased person was and how, when and where they died and to provide the details needed for their death to be registered. It is not a trial. It is not for the Coroner to decide, or appear to decide, any question of criminal or civil liability or to apportion guilt or attribute blame.
3. Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights imposes a positive duty to investigate deaths in which State agents may be implicated. The European Court of Human Rights as established that in order to satisfy the requirements of Article 2, any investigation must be independent, prompt and proceed with reasonable expedition, be open to public scrutiny, involve the next of kin of the deceased and be capable of leading to a determination of whether any force used was justified and to the identification and punishment of those responsible for the death. Case law has determined that an inquest can satisfy this investigatory obligation.

ENDS

If you have any further enquiries about this or other court related matters please contact:

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