**The Designated Family Court at Manchester**

**Police Disclosure Temporary arrangements**

**Commencing November 2020**

1. GMP have been struggling for some time with the volume and intensity of the request for disclosures. They have one thousand cases which need to be actioned within the CRU Family Section. They are some months behind with protocol disclosures and are prioritising orders. GMP are currently recruiting and training staff and hope to resolve the issues they face generally by summer 2021.
2. It is in accordance with the overriding objective of the FPR that each party before the Court in family cases frames their protocol requests and draft directions to be miserly with a resource which is acutely pressed.
3. GMP are only too aware that the delay in obtaining police materials is having a significant impact in both private family and public law cases.
4. Recent discussions with them have produced constructive suggestions intended to assist the police to address the current backlog and to reduce waiting time prior to Summer 2021:
   1. When a local authority seeks disclosure, whether under the Protocol or by way of Court direction, usually it should initially be for FWINS and antecedents only. Such application or request must be made as early as possible.
   2. The protocol request or directions order must include full names and addresses of each party about whom disclosure is sought. Without this, GMP will not be able to provide the disclosure.
   3. In general disclosure should be in respect of a period of no more than two years before the request. If there is a significant event or issue which predates two years before the request, then the party requesting the disclosure must specify the date or period and summarise the event or events in respect of which FWINS disclosure is sought.
   4. When issuing proceedings, the local authority should provide to the Court a copy of the protocol request made to the police.
   5. If the case requires additional evidence or, in the absence of compliance with the protocol prior to issue, at the point of issue or at First Case Management Conference, a draft order should be supplied which specifies exactly what is required from GMP by way of disclosure and explaining in summary why it is relevant to the issues in the case.
   6. General directions for the production of BodyCam footage and/or which require statements from officers should be avoided unless it is clear that a specific incident is in issue and a determination of the disputed facts is essential for the resolution of the case.
   7. Where relevant, when a final order is made and outstanding disclosure is no longer required by the court, that order should provide for the police to be informed.

Final orders made in care and private law proceedings should include this paragraph: -

***The court/LA will disclose a copy of this order to the police. Any previous order for the police to file disclosure in relation to this case is dispensed with.***

**Issued by Her Honour Judge Singleton QC Designated Family Judge for Greater Manchester**

**November 2020**