



Sir Brendan Barber

17 April 2020

Dear Sir Brendan

### **The Death of Carl Sargeant and the IQCI**

Thank you for your letter of 14 April setting out the outcome of your discussions and your recommendations to me. I was most grateful to you for accepting my request to play a mediating role with the parties concerned to see if an agreed way forward could be found. I am also grateful to the family of the late Carl Sargeant and to the former First Minister Carwyn Jones for their constructive engagement. I appreciate that it will not have been easy for them.

Having considered their wishes, as reported in your letter, and the considerations of the public interest set out below, I accept both of the recommendations which you have made to me. I agree that there would be considerable public cost and, given the extent to which matters have been rehearsed at the Inquest, little to be gained, by continuing with the Independent QC Investigation, and I will now be taking steps to bring it to a close. I am grateful to the Independent Investigator Paul Bowen QC and his team for their work.

I confirm that the Welsh Government will in the next few days be making the payment of £220,000 (inclusive of VAT) to the legal representatives, as the reasonable outstanding legal costs of the family, as recommended in your letter. This payment will be made on the understanding that you have established, that this will bring an end to the examination of issues surrounding Carl's death. From the family's point of view this will prevent further prolonging of the distress they have experienced and no further legal action would be contemplated by them.

This reimbursement of that element of the legal costs which the Welsh Government has no obligation to meet is an exceptional step and should not be seen as setting any kind of precedent. To a large extent the proceedings of the Inquest covered the same ground as the remit of the Investigation, where the Welsh Government would have been contractually committed to meeting the legal costs of the family (under the terms in which the Investigation was established). As you set out in your letter, the costs which would be incurred by

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

continuing with the Investigation are not justifiable. I have concluded therefore that this payment is in the public interest and represents a substantial net saving to the public purse.

I will report this outcome to the Senedd by publishing your letter to me and this reply.

Thank you again for your work in helping bring this important matter to a close.

I am copying this letter to Jack Sargeant AM, Carwyn Jones AM, and Neil Hudgell.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**MARK DRAKEFORD**