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WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 16.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9

URN

Occurrence Number: 47240212641

Statement of: [REDACTED]

Age if under 18: Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Police Officer

This statement (consisting of 2 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: [REDACTED]

Date: 26/11/2024 11:24

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☒

On Friday 25th October 2024 I was on duty in full uniform using the callsign [REDACTED] and was assigned to incident 715 24/10/24 which I asked to be created to monitor the Scientology event and the planned protest which would be attending over the weekend. Along with myself I also had further officers [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
and [REDACTED]

At 1544hrs I met the protesters on St Hill Road East Grinstead where I introduced myself to [REDACTED] who I had previously met and spoken to on the phone to organise where I would meet them and at what time. As they were walking down the road, I could see the protestors were all wearing high visibility vest or jackets, and some were holding placards. I believe these had words to the effect of "THE ABUSE HAS TO STOP" and "STOP THE ABUSE" written on them. I could also hear chanting of "THE ABUSE HAS TO STOP" which was being repeatedly shouted as they walked along the road but immediately stopped when they spoke to me. I initially walked [REDACTED] down to the entrance of the St Hill Manor where we discussed where they would stand. As I walked towards the entrance, I could hear the sound of bagpipes being played out of several speakers onto the roadside on repeat which was very loud. This was all recorded on my Body worn video (BWV) which I have exhibited as DAJ/02 and uploaded onto the police computer systems. The protestors were then escorted down to the area and positioned on the side of the road along the wall of St Hill Manor between the East Grinstead Rugby club and the main site entrance. Where they would be able to see people attending but not affect either the road or foot traffic to the site. Throughout the afternoon they stayed in this area which we agreed upon on arrival at the side of the road and did not venture onto the road or into the entrance of the site to block any vehicles at any time. Between myself and my PCSOs we kept a constant dialogue going with both the protestors and the security at the gates if anything was to be raised. Now

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and then the protestors would shout "THE ABUSE HAS TO STOP" but not at anyone directly.

There were several pedestrians walking down to the site from the rugby club car park who walked on the road due to their being a large amount of mud on the side of the road and were not affected by the protestors at any time. Several times the protestors called out to the attendees complimenting their appearance or wishing them a good night and no derogatory comments were made towards anyone and no chanting was directed at any of the attendees. There was also a constant flow of cars and busses in and out of the site which caused some build up of traffic along the road due to the car parks being full on the site and the cars were having to go in and turn around to leave the site again. I raised this issue with the security and asked them to divert traffic from entering the site if they knew it was full and send them straight to the other car parks to alleviate the traffic build up.

At 1852hrs I had a final discussion about how the day went with [REDACTED] which I recorded on BWV and can produce this as my exhibit DAJ/01 where the bagpipes can still be heard being played on repeat towards the roadside. I explained to [REDACTED] that no complaints were raised towards the police at any time from any members of the public or from the security on the gates. Throughout the afternoon the protestors were good natured and did not require any police involvement and no warnings were provided to anyone. Just after 1900hrs I stood all my officers down from the event and we provided an escort back along the road away from the site.

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