

For Immediate Release 9 February 2007

INQUEST OPENS INTO DEATH OF MAN FOUND HANGED IN COURT CELL IN ORMSKIRK

10.00am Monday 12 February 2007

Before HM Coroner for Preston, North and South West Lancashire District, Dr James Adeley

Sitting at Lancaster Shire Hall, Castle Parade, Lancaster. LA1 1YJ

The inquest into the death of 24 year old Martin Wilson who was found hanged on 27 November 2003 in a cell at Ormskirk Magistrates Court will begin on Monday 12 February. The inquest is scheduled for two weeks.

Martin was arrested on 25 November 2003 on suspicion of burglary and was placed in custody at Ormskirk Police Station. He had earlier voluntarily left the Scarisbrick Unit at Ormskirk Hospital where he was being assessed for psychiatric problems following several suicide attempts. As this was known to the police he was placed on 30 minutes observations and at some stage his clothing was removed for safety reasons. Martin remained in the custody of Lancashire Constabulary until the morning of 27 November when he was handed over to Global Solutions Limited (GSL), who were responsible for his custody and care during his transportation and attendance at Ormskirk Magistrates' Court

At court Martin was placed in a shared cell where he was regularly observed. When he was checked at 2.05pm there was no response and it was noted that his head was drooping. An ambulance was called but Martin was pronounced dead at 2.20pm.

The family hopes the inquest will examine a number of key issues, including:

- How Martin was assessed on arrival and during his time at the police station.
- The procedure for assessing the risk of returning clothes to a vulnerable and possibly suicidal prisoner, especially clothes which could be used as potential ligatures
- The training provided to GSL staff in relation to working at the custody suite, specifically when receiving an at risk prisoner.
- Were regular checks carried out by GSL staff and what was the quality of these checks?

Mr. Wilson's family are being represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members Joanne Kearsley of Farley's Solicitors and barrister Colin Hutchinson of Garden Court Chambers.

Notes to Editors

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INQUEST is the only non-governmental organisation in England and Wales that works directly with the families of those who die in custody. It provides an independent free legal and advice service to bereaved people on inquest procedures and their rights in the coroner's courts.

Further Information	www.inquest.org.uk
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