

## Tom Watson 'confused claims over VIP child sex abuse'

Whistleblower says deputy Labour leader went too far in PMQs allegations



Deputy Labour leader Tom Watson Photo: Rii Schroer/The Telegraph

By Robert Mendick

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Tom Watson “mixed up” his facts and made exaggerated claims about a “powerful paedophile network” linked to Downing Street, the whistleblower who alerted him to child abuse has told The Telegraph.

Peter McKelvie, a former child protection officer, said the deputy Labour leader had been too hasty in making his intervention during Prime Minister's questions (PMQs) in October 2012.



Tom Watson wrote to Alison Saunders on at least five occasions Photo: ELEANOR BENTALL

Mr Watson's claim that he was aware of "clear intelligence suggesting a powerful paedophile network linked to Parliament and No 10" prompted a series of police investigations.

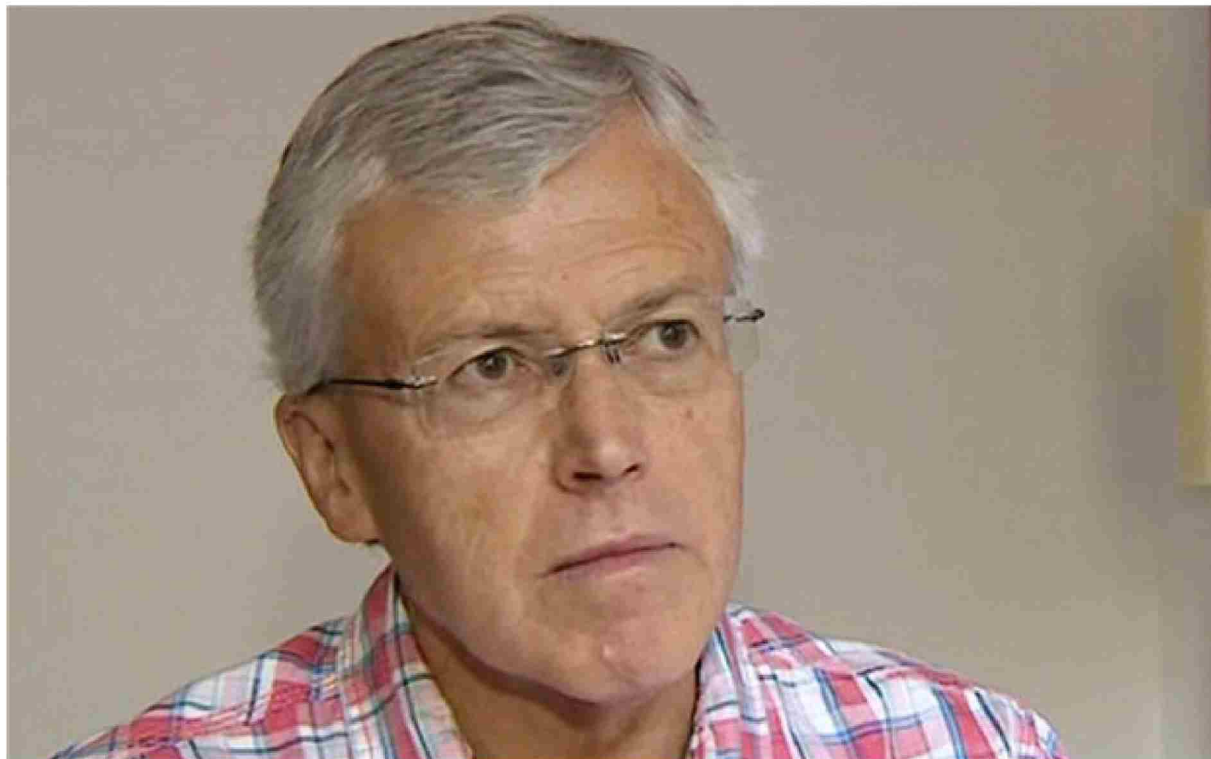
*"He should have waited until the picture was complete. He should have met me face to face"*

Some of the more lurid allegations are now under scrutiny, amid concern that Mr Watson's intervention has led to witch-hunts of former senior Conservatives.

Peter McKelvie, a former child protection officer

Mr McKelvie said he had spoken to Mr Watson by telephone but they had not met before the Labour MP made his claims in Parliament.

He initially contacted Mr Watson with details of files on Peter Righton, who was a senior figure in the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE). His whistleblowing led to the jailing of Charles Napier, a former treasurer of PIE, in December last year.



Peter McKelvie worked as a child protection manager in Hereford Photo: BBC

Mr McKelvie said: “If he [Watson] had waited until a formal meeting with other people I was working with, it would have been put in perspective. Things were mixed up.

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"WI had very limited information. It [what Watson said at PMQs] wasn't a true reflection of what I was trying to get across and I was surprised there was an urgency.

"He should have waited until the picture was complete. He should have met me face to face. I was the source of the PMQ but ... it became convoluted in his head."

Mr McKelvie, who has since fallen out with Mr Watson, said he would give full evidence on what precisely he told the MP to the Goddard Inquiry, set up by the Government last year to examine historic allegations of sex abuse in institutions including boarding schools and children's homes.

Mr McKelvie confirmed he had never mentioned to Mr Watson claims of abuse at Dolphin Square, a set of apartments in Westminster, and at Elm Guest House in Barnes, south-west London.

Police are investigating both sets of allegations but have had to retract a statement that one alleged victim's claims of witnessing murders at Dolphin Square were "credible and true".

Mr McKelvie said: "When I went to Tom Watson I had never heard of Elm House or Dolphin Square.

"I would never have wanted Tom Watson to do a PMQ as a tactic until he heard the whole story.

"The only thing I wanted to say about politicians is every institution has abusers in it.

"The more powerful people are, the more likely they are to get away with it. I never talked about rings."

Mr McKelvie's evidence to the inquiry could be damaging for Mr Watson, who is already under fire for intervening in a separate police investigation into a claim that Lord Brittan, the former Tory home secretary, raped a 19-year-old woman in 1967.

The officer leading the investigation, Det Chief Insp Paul Settle, was sidelined by the Metropolitan Police after Mr Watson wrote to the Director of Public Prosecutions demanding to know why Lord Brittan, who was dying of cancer, had not been questioned.

Mr Settle had concluded there was insufficient evidence to justify interviewing Lord Brittan.

Mr McKelvie said Mr Watson's claims had the effect of galvanising the authorities, but added: "The tactics he used have become the story."

A spokesman for Mr Watson refused to comment.



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