

Coventry Telegraph

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2012

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TOKENS INSIDE

TELEGRAPH EXCLUSIVE

TEXTS THAT REVEAL BULLYING TORMENT OF BBC MAN



RUSSELL JOSLIN

By Les Reid

A BBC journalist sent a string of text messages accusing bosses of ignoring his complaints of bullying and sexual harassment by a female colleague – just days before apparently taking his own life.

Broadcaster Russell Joslin, aged 50, who worked for BBC Coventry and Warwickshire, believed bosses ignored his complaints, including about an ex female colleague he said “pestered him endlessly”. He ended up taking several months off work with mental health problems.

One message sent less than three weeks before his tragic death on Monday, seen exclusively by the Telegraph, said: “I have changed since I was ill, which I blame them for. I loathe the BBC.”

Distraught dad Peter Joslin – former Warwickshire police chief said: “Questions have to be asked by the BBC and not swept under the carpet.”

FULL STORY: PAGE 2

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He accused bosses of a cover-up just days before his death

In the news today

Family pay tribute after train death tragedy **PAGE 5**

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LOTTERY NUMBERS

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TRAGEDY: Journalist Russell Joslin who is believed to have killed himself

STRING OF TEXTS ACCUSED BBC OF A COVER-UP

Exclusive
By Les Reid
 POLITICAL REPORTER

BBC Coventry and Warwickshire journalist Russell Joslin left behind allegations of sexual harassment, bullying and a BBC cover-up before his apparent suicide - in texts exclusively seen by the Telegraph.

The string of text messages testify the respected 50-year-old broadcaster blamed the depression which took him out of work this year on BBC management - and its failure to respond to his concerns. His father Peter, a former Warwickshire chief constable, also has recordings left by his son revealing how one former female BBC Coventry and Warwickshire colleague had spoken to him. Russell believed she had harassed and bullied him after he spurned her sexual advances. One of Russell's texts to a friend was sent on October 5, while off sick from his job - less than three weeks before his tragic death on Monday. It stated: "I have changed since I was ill, which I blame them for. I loathe the BBC, the entire mindset." The texts also show how he

drew parallels with the current alleged BBC cover-up over former Radio One presenter Jimmy Savile's alleged sexual abuse. Again on October 5, Russell texted: "Who could possibly believe (words removed) are sexual predators and the corporation sweeps allegations under carpet. I told you the (name removed) story? How she pestered me endlessly. I made a complaint. Ignored." Russell's family and friends say he was "haunted" by the saga from the mid-2000s, and the anguish plagued him further this year. The Telegraph exclusively revealed yesterday how Russell's father had called for the BBC to hold an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding his death, and complaints he had made. A coroner's inquest was opened and adjourned yesterday after a post-mortem concluded he died of asphyxiation. Russell developed renewed grievances with BBC managers in the spring this year over his working arrangements. He took several months off work with mental health problems, before recently returning to BBC Coventry and Warwickshire two days a week, including reading the news. His father Peter, of High

Street, Kenilworth, where Russell lived next door, told the Telegraph: "Questions have to be asked by the BBC and not swept under the carpet. "Mistakes should be looked at so they can be avoided in the future." "It's too late now to save my son. He complained at the time. Nothing was done. "He recorded himself and (name withheld by us) and the threats she made to him. We have evidence word for word of exactly what was said. "I had a visit from BBC regional official Cath Hearn on Wednesday. I got the impression they would have some kind of inquiry. It is something they should have done before, including a week ago when Russell went to see them. "I'm used to death, having served on the murder squad - but when it's your own son it's different." It is believed Russell jumped in front of a bus in Kenilworth's main road, Warwick Road, on Saturday morning, and told ambulance workers he was trying to commit suicide. He had also told a friend he would attempt suicide. He was taken to the mental health unit at St Michael's, Warwick, where it's thought

he suffocated himself on Monday. He was pronounced dead after being taken to Warwick Hospital. Peter said Russell had shown no signs of mental illness until earlier this year. Journalists, politicians and radio listeners have been posting tributes to Russell on social media, including former Coventry Telegraph deputy editor John Lamb who described him as a "great character", "well-liked" and "infectious". The woman accused of harassing him is reported to have said there was never a complaint against her, despite Russell's claim in his text messages. She denies any wrong-doing, and claims she was asked by managers to try to help him. The BBC said in a statement: "Our thoughts and condolences are with Russell Joslin's family at this sad time. This is a difficult time for everyone who knew him. "The BBC is committed to working constructively with the family to ensure that their concerns are vigorously addressed. It would not be appropriate to comment further until the facts are established." We have offered to hand Russell's evidence in his text messages to the coroner and the police.

Savile 'one of most prolific sex offenders'

BBC presenter Jimmy Savile is one of the most prolific sex offenders in recent history and the inquiry into his abuse will be a "watershed" investigation into sex crime, Scotland Yard said yesterday.

Commander Peter Spindler said the force is now dealing with around 300 potential victims, of whom all except two are women. Suspects other than Savile have been accused and officers are

"developing an arrest strategy" but have yet to detain anyone or interview them under caution, he said. Mr Spindler said Savile was "undoubtedly" one of the most prolific sex offenders he had come

across. He added: "Within London we have trebled the number of historic abuse allegations. I have no doubt that we're in a watershed moment and (this) will be a landmark investigation."



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Les Reid

INSIDE THE WORLD OF POLITICS

Justice for BBC's Joslin – a man of the people

MY long-time friend and BBC Coventry and Warwickshire broadcaster Russell Joslin – whose funeral takes place today – was a man who in life, and through his journalism, brimmed with humanity.

Last week, he was the journalist who became the story – after his apparent suicide. He hit the headlines nationally and internationally.

Though nothing can bring back Russell, the coverage was small mercy. From the large trail of evidence he deliberately left behind, it is categorically what he would have wanted.

It followed exclusive reports in this newspaper of his family calling for a BBC inquiry into the circumstances surrounding his death, and of texts he sent to friends, including me.

As my investigation yesterday revealed, Russell spent his last days in contact with BBC West Midlands managers and HR officials desperately trying to resolve the work-related issues that tormented him and tipped him into being off work this year with anxiety and depression.

The BBC apparently denied to him having any record of his earlier complaints that he was sexually harassed and bullied by a former high-powered BBC female colleague from 2007 – who cannot be named for legal reasons and now works elsewhere at the BBC.

He felt these and other concerns were since covered-up or ignored, and that he had been unfairly sidelined –



TRAGIC: BBC man Russell Joslin

unable to let his immense creative talent flow, through the roving reporting he excelled at.

The facts must be established by the coroner and others. As we revealed yesterday, detective sergeant Sue Coutts clearly told me and Russell's family the police were preliminarily investigating, in particular, the bullying and harassment allegations. The BBC has now said its internal inquiry will be "overseen by an external professional".

It followed my call, live on the BBC, for an independent investigation into whether Russell's concerns were adequately handled by the corporation's management in his final days, this year and five years ago. The family backed that call.

I am a supporter of the taxpayer-funded BBC. If it is seen to be transparent, and upholding the highest standards in public life, it must now

itself insist on a full independent inquiry.

I was invited onto BBC Coventry and Warwickshire to pay tribute to Russell, give my views about his allegations, and comment on what should be done.

I was told the BBC wanted to report the death of Russell – a friend to many staff there – in an objective way.

Little wonder, you might think, amid allegations of a BBC cover-up over Jimmy Savile's sexual abuse – following the eleventh-hour scrapping of a Newsnight broadcast.

Tragically, from Russell's texts we reported on Friday, the Savile scandal was a major trigger for his heightened anxiety.

In particular, he was irritated, and went into overdrive to finally get matters off his chest, when a certain BBC personality – who cannot be named for legal reasons – commented nationally over sexual abuse at the BBC.

His family – including dad Peter, the ex-Warwickshire chief constable – has commented on these issues.

Today, we remember Russell as a genuine class act; an infectious, jocular and irreverent character who loved people's company, making him a fine journalist.

Russell always had time for people. It made him as popular in the bars and cafes of his home town Kenilworth, and his beloved Ireland, as he was in the professional circles he moved in.

Those who knew the long-haired 50-year-old bohemian may be sur-

prised to learn he was a handsome, quiffed, stripling in the 1980s when I first met him – looking like the fifth member of The Clash or he had stepped out of a 1950s Montgomery Clift film.

He loved music, cooking, theatre and reading. He told his Irish mum Kathy that books were to be left around and

“ Russell was a genuine class act. An infectious, jocular and irreverent character who loved people's company

picked up, not to be put away in cupboards.

Other inquiries must decide how, appallingly, he was found suffocated in St Michael's mental health hospital where he was supposed to be safe – three days after being struck and largely uninjured by a bus, in what his family believes may have been a cry for help.

Coventry and Warwickshire, and the country, has lost a quality man and broadcaster. He will be widely missed.

I share his family's desire for some posthumous semblance of justice. His concerns about the BBC must finally be fully and openly addressed, and lessons learned.

City people have a toothy problem

HALF of Coventry's residents go a whole day without brushing their teeth, new research suggests.

A similar number admit to using someone else's toothbrush, according to a survey by the Simplyhealth Advisory Research Panel.

Nearly three quarters have noticed blood in their spit after brushing their teeth, a possible sign of gum disease.

The panel has urged people to visit their dentist at least once a year, or every six months if they suffer from osteoporosis.

It also advises people to ask their dentist for a basic periodontal examination to check for gum disease and to ask for information about how their diet can affect their dental health.

Urban dance stars are born

RISING urban dance band Nu Born Union are one step away from the final of a national singing competition.

The four-piece group from Rugby are playing in the Open Mic UK area final at the Bedford Corn Exchange on November 25.

There, a panel of industry experts will decide if the band are good enough to make it to the national final at The O2 in London in January.

An Open Mic spokesman said: "We are searching for an act that has the ability to impress an audience, industry judges and A&R associates, and the potential to become a professional recording artist."

The band earned a place in the area finals after performing at the regionals in Bedford on October 21.

Don't miss Les Reid's blog at www.coventrytelegraph.net

Health benefits of eating oily fish

EATING two portions of oily fish a week could help ward off a stroke, research suggests.

Scientists have found that eating two helpings of oily fish – such as salmon, trout or

mackerel – every week could moderately reduce risk of a stroke. However, fish oil supplements do not have the same beneficial effect as oily fish the study found.

DAVID WILL NOT GET VITAL DRUG

Cystic fibrosis sufferer no longer meets hospital's criteria

By Warren Manger
HEALTH REPORTER

A COVENTRY student is still being denied a new cystic fibrosis drug – despite it being approved for other patients at the same hospital.

David Noonan has spearheaded a campaign for Heartlands Hospital to prescribe the revolutionary drug, Kalydeco, for patients with a particular type of cystic fibrosis.

As a result the manufacturer has agreed to give the most seriously ill patients the drug for free.

However, David has missed out on the medication himself – because his latest course of treatment means he no longer meets the strict criteria.

The devastating news cast a

dark shadow over David's 21st birthday celebrations yesterday.

David, of Eastern Green, said: "I am really pleased for those patients who are going to get the drug.

"But at the same time I'm disappointed I won't be getting it too.

"I have told the doctors and I want them to fight my corner."

David has a rare strain of cystic fibrosis that is shared by one in every 20 sufferers in the UK – including his younger sister Rebecca.

During the last few years his condition has deteriorated rapidly and his lung capacity has plummeted. He now takes 50 pills every day.

A new drug Kalydeco was approved for use by the European Medicines Agency in July.

It preserves – and even restores – patients' lung capacity. It can also dramatically prolong their lives.

The NHS has recognised the huge medical benefits the drug offers, but has not yet agreed to fund it.

David said: "The last month has been the worst of my life. I am deteriorating while I am waiting."

The manufacturer, Vertex Pharmaceuticals, had already offered the drug free for seriously ill patients through a "compassionate" scheme.

Yet until now Heartlands Hospital has refused to prescribe Kalydeco.

Bosses feared they would have to withdraw the drug if the firm started charging for it – because they could not afford to pay £182,000 per year for each patient.

Vertex has now agreed to provide the drug free for as long as required.

However, that only applies to patients whose lung capacity has dipped to less than 40 per cent.

David's condition had previously reached that level, but a recent course of hospital treatment took him back above the threshold.

Cystic fibrosis campaigner Jessica Nickless said she was sad the "good will" had not gone as far as to supply David with the drug he needed.

The Telegraph understands that Heartlands Hospital has agreed to ask for David to be given Kalydeco on compassionate grounds and to apply for NHS funding for the drug.

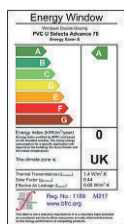
However, we were unable to obtain confirmation yesterday.



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TRAGIC BBC MAN: POLICE PROBE BULLYING CLAIMS

EXCLUSIVE

By Les Reid

POLITICAL REPORTER

POLICE are investigating sexual harassment and bullying allegations surrounding the apparent suicide of BBC Coventry and Warwickshire journalist Russell Joslin, the Telegraph has learned.

It comes as a Telegraph investigation can reveal the BBC's West Midlands boss sent an apparently misdirected text in error to Mr Joslin days before his death – in which she seemingly intended to urge a colleague dealing with his concerns not to contact him.

Other texts left behind on his phone reveal his heightened anxiety at allegedly being told the BBC had no record of his previous complaints about sexual harassment and workplace bullying by a high-powered female ex-colleague; about a subsequent BBC cover-up; and his claims of being sidelined since.

His family and ex-girlfriend told this newspaper that both incidents were “major triggers” which led to tragedy, after the respected 50-year-old walked in front of a bus in Warwick Road, Kenilworth, on Friday, October 19, which did not kill him.

The previous day, the misdirected text had been sent to him by BBC West Midlands' head of programmes, Cath Hearne. It states: “However, do not contact him until he gets back to me. This is massively sensitive.” Her preceding words were not sent to Mr Joslin.

A text to ex-partner Lucy Poulson at 11.20am on October 19 states: “Just jumped under a bus. I have been stitched up. Failed. Sorry. I always love you and mum and dad and all. x”

He died three days later at Warwick Hospital after being found suffocated at St Michael's mental health hospital in Warwick.

Warwickshire detectives confirmed they are investigating the bullying and harassment allegations, separate to an ongoing coroner's inquest. A family statement issued to us states: “This is what Russell would have wanted. It is the first step towards justice for Russell.”



ANXIETY: BBC Coventry And Warwickshire journalist Russell Joslin died at Warwick Hospital earlier this month.

The bus incident may not have been a suicide attempt but a “cry for help”, believes his father Peter Joslin, a former Warwickshire police chief constable.

Miss Poulson, a 32-year-old drama teacher, believes from texts and speaking with him that it was a mock attempted suicide staged to enable his story to be reported by the media. It is thought his injuries were not serious or life threatening.

After calling for a BBC inquiry, the family is now calling for an independent inquiry into whether the corporation's management properly responded to Mr Joslin's complaints.

They want it to include an exami-

nation of why he was apparently told there was no record of specific complaints he made to BBC occupational health in spring this year about the ex-female colleague.

He long alleged she had bullied him and sought to sideline him at work after he had spurned her sexual advances.

He had apparently spoken with occupational health this spring when he was off work sick with stress and depression. He was seeking desperately to have his issues finally addressed by the BBC.

On October 10, Mr Joslin texted Ms Poulson saying a BBC human resources (HR) official had phoned him saying she wanted to meet to

talk. He added: “Denied anything about (the former female colleague, name withheld) was mentioned in occupational health report. Was very abrupt with her.”

He had kept recorded voicemails he received from the female ex-colleague, who cannot be named for legal reasons but still works elsewhere for the BBC. She had sent them immediately after he had apparently rejected her advances at a Kenilworth restaurant in 2007.

A string of abuse included her words: “Do what you have to at the BBC because you are a loser on 27 grand a year. But don't ever encroach on me or my talent”. In another voicemail, she said: “You are

flaky, you are poor, you are weak.”

Texts from Mr Joslin, who lived at High Street, Kenilworth – next door to his parents – also reveal his claims that colleagues, including line managers at the BBC's Coventry station, knew about his complaints back in 2007, and he was aggrieved nothing was done.

The texts confirm he was desperately trying to have his concerns finally addressed by the BBC in the run-up to his death.

Three days before the bus incident, he texted BBC HR officer Rani Randhawa stating he was “grateful” that Ms Hearne had agreed to “take time to talk” to him. But he added he was unhappy with a proposal the meeting should be through “a glass door” at BBC Coventry And Warwickshire where, he wrote, “Everyone knows there is something going on.”

The day before the bus incident, Ms Hearne texted him at 9.04am, saying she was “willing to listen further”, adding: “Is it ok to give my assistant both your numbers so we can fix a chat in Kenilworth?”

At 12.13pm, Ms Hearne sent the apparently misdirected text to him, then seemed to spot her error. Three minutes later she texted: “Sorry Russell, I misunderstood as in the middle of something else. I thought this was my assistant.”

“You'll realise how sensitive I understand it to be. Do you want to ask Rani to contact you? She and I are meeting this pm to consider how we can best help you.”

The Telegraph has inquired with the BBC whether either meeting took place.

Mr Joslin's earlier text messages on October 7 and 10 highlight how revelations about sexual abuse and cover-ups relating to late BBC Radio One DJ Jimmy Savile renewed his anguish. He also claimed national journalists were beginning to inquire about his allegations.

He texted a friend and BBC colleague with the words: “It's impossible to report anything and always will be, or to be taken seriously.”

He particularly suffered from comments made over the Savile saga by one BBC personality, who cannot be mentioned for legal reasons.

He texted Ms Poulson stating that, in response, he had contacted a colleague at BBC Coventry And Warwickshire and threatened to go to the papers with his story, adding: “All hell has now broken loose.”

His family says he had met with a senior HR official at the BBC HQ at the Mailbox in Birmingham, apparently on October 15, to finally “get the whole saga off his chest”.

Family and friends said he was reluctant to enact a formal grievance procedure back in 2007 about the female colleague, who he saw as being in a position of authority, because it could scupper his BBC career.

But they say he had spoken with colleagues and line managers of his serious concerns at the time, yet nothing was done.

■ **Mr Joslin's funeral takes place tomorrow at 10am at St Francis of Assisi Church, Warwick Road, Kenilworth.**

Boss's 'no record' denial a massive blow, say family

RUSSELL Joslin's family said that being told the BBC had no record in his occupational health report of his complaints about the ex-female colleague was “a massive blow” and key to the tragedy.

A family statement issued to us continues: “He became listless and felt, ‘I've got nowhere to go now’.

“It's disingenuous to say they've never heard anything about Russell's concerns relating to the former female colleague and his treatment after that.”

One incident included the ex-female colleague cutting Mr Joslin off while he was live on air, as heard by his family, friends and

other colleagues. The family also alleges she sent him abrupt emails, which he raised concerns about.

The family also want an answer over why Russell was apparently urged to return to his job if he wanted to advance his career in the wider BBC, when occupational health and a GP had appeared to advise that Mr Joslin should not return to the station.

They also allege his handling by BBC occupational health this spring was inadequate, because Russell had said it took place over the phone, rather than face-to-face.

The former female colleague is reported to have said, in an

anonymous statement last week, that she was unaware of any complaint against her, but that she had been asked to help Russell.

We have asked the BBC whether that is true and, if so, whether it would have been an appropriate way of handling staff concerns and complaints.

Tributes pouring in since Mr Joslin's death hit the international headlines testify to his popularity as an extremely sociable person with a standing as a “fine” journalist.

■ The BBC said in a statement to us yesterday that it was now holding an investigation to establish the facts “overseen by an external

professional”. It said the BBC could not comment on specific details, but the investigation would seek to “establish the facts about how any complaints made by Russell were reported and how the BBC acted on them.”

It added: “We will also co-operate fully with the coroner's inquest which is charged with determining the cause of Russell's death and will consider its findings carefully”.

A BBC spokeswoman declined to comment on whether Mr Joslin's female ex-colleague will continue working elsewhere for the BBC while its investigation continues.

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MPs DEMAND PROBE INTO BBC DEATH

QUESTIONS:
Russell Joslin

Call for full inquiry free from corporation's influence

By Les Reid
POLITICAL REPORTER

MPs have joined calls for a fully independent inquiry into how BBC bosses handled a BBC Coventry and Warwickshire journalist Russell Joslin's concerns before his apparent suicide.

They include Coventry South Labour MP Jim Cunningham and Chris White, Conservative MP for Warwick and Leamington.

Mr Cunningham said he will write to justice secretary Chris Grayling calling for a full independent inquiry.

Jeremy Wright, a justice minister and Tory MP for Kenilworth, where Mr Joslin lived, also pledged to "offer whatever help I can" to the family, which includes father Peter Joslin, a former Warwickshire police chief constable who lives in High Street, Kenilworth.

The family is calling for a fully independent inquiry, as are colleagues of Mr Joslin at BBC Coventry and Warwickshire.



HELP: MP Jeremy Wright

As we reported yesterday, they are unhappy with the BBC's pledge of an inquiry "overseen by an external professional" and want to be able to speak freely to a fully independent inquiry. They describe a "climate of fear" over speaking out and said they shared Mr Joslin's concerns about how staff issues were addressed.

Michelle Stanistreet, the National Union of Journalists general secretary, has also backed the local NUJ branch's call for an independent inquiry. The union is awaiting a response to a letter

to BBC director general George Entwistle.

Mr Cunningham said: "It is in the interests of the BBC, given the recent bad publicity surrounding the Jimmy Savile saga, to have a fully independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Russell Joslin, so there is no doubt in anybody's mind."

Mr White said: "I believe that it is important that Mr Joslin's family have the opportunity to get all the answers surrounding this tragic case. A full independent inquiry would in my view be the best way to achieve this."

The 50-year-old was found suffocated at St Michael's psychiatric hospital in Warwick, and died on October 22, three days after walking in front of a bus in Warwick Road, Kenilworth, in which he was largely uninjured and his family believes may have been a cry for help.

Texts left by Mr Joslin, show in the run up to his death he was plagued by

the work-related issues which saw him off work with stress and depression this year.

He had been in text contact with BBC West Midlands head of programmes Cath Hearne and senior BBC HR officer Rani Randhawa.

His concerns included the behaviour of a former female colleague who Mr Joslin accused of sexual harassment and bullying, and why nothing was done by managers.

The texts show he felt sidelined and ignored since, and was unhappy to apparently be told there was no record of previous complaints to occupational health.

One BBC Midlands insider also claimed the conclusions of an internal BBC inquiry last year, headed by an independent person, into "bullying" complaints was never made public, and little was done.

It comes as an inquiry is considering BBC bullying allegations around the Jimmy Savile scandal.

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In the courts

CASES heard at Coventry Magistrates Court on Monday, October 15, included:
Ian Brown, 35, of Seaford Close, Aldermans Green, admitted driving with the wrong licence. He was fined £36, given three points, and told to pay the £15 victim surcharge.
Lisa Brown, 27, of Tomson Avenue, Radford, admitted willfully obstructing a police officer. She was fined £73 and told to pay £40 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Keith Gregor, 49, of Canberra Road, Aldermans Green, admitted failing to provide a breath-test. He was fined £350, banned from driving for 12 months, and told to pay £45 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Jamie Henderson, 19, of Littlethorpe, Willenhall, admitted stealing groceries worth £43.98 from Morrisons. He was given six months' supervision.
Samuel Monger, 27, of Blackberry Lane, Wyken, admitted stealing a Dyson vacuum cleaner worth £269 from Asda. He was conditionally discharged for 12 months.
CASES heard at Coventry Magistrates Court on Tuesday, October 16, included:
David Costello, 22, of Roosevelt Drive, Tile Hill North, admitted breaching a suspended sentence by failing to attend unpaid work, and being sent home from unpaid work.

He was jailed for six weeks.
Shaun Davie, 25, of Gulson Road, Lower Stoke, admitted breaching a suspended sentence by failing to attend unpaid work. He was given an extra 14 hours of unpaid work and told to pay £50 costs.
Geoff Early, 26, of Walsgrave Road, Stoke, admitted breaching a community order by failing to attend unpaid work. He was given an extra 14 hours of unpaid work and told to pay £50 costs.
Jamie Hislop, 22, of no fixed address, admitted breaching a community order by failing to attend unpaid work. He was given an extra 14 hours of unpaid work and told to pay £50 costs.
Daniel Townsey, 24, of Lily Close, Holbrooks, was convicted in his absence of breaching a community order by failing to attend supervision. He was given six months' supervision.
Ryan Galvin, 24, of The Moorfield, Stoke Aldermoor, admitted breaching a suspended sentence by failing to comply with a curfew. He was given an extra 30 days' curfew and told to pay £85 costs.
Martin Bell, 36, of Tom Henderson Close, Binley, admitted damaging a car. He was fined £70 and told to pay £200 compensation, £50 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Robert Dryden, 27, of Chace

Avenue, Willenhall, was convicted in his absence of breaching a community order by failing to attend unpaid work. He was given an extra ten hours of unpaid work and told to pay £50 costs.
Ionut Bursila, 24, of Ransom Road, Foleshill, was convicted in his absence of driving with the wrong licence and no insurance. He was fined £700, given six points, and told to pay £80 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Simon Millward, 41, of Abbeydale Close, Binley, was convicted in his absence of using a mobile phone while driving. He was fined £200, given three points, and told to pay £80 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Samantha Bayliss, 39, of Sandpits Lane, Keresley, consenting to causing a breach of the peace. She was bound over for £150 for 12 months.
Dennis Rogers, of Sandy Lane, Radford, was found guilty of failing to clear up dog mess. He was fined £75 and told to pay £200 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.
Jason Wilson, 39, of Elgar Road, Courthouse Green, admitted inappropriate use of a car horn, and failing to stop for a police officer. He was fined £160 and told to pay £85 costs and the £15 victim surcharge.

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PATTEN: JOURNALIST DEATH PROBE 'MUST BE INDEPENDENT'

Chairman of BBC Trust backs family's inquiry call

By Les Reid
POLITICAL REPORTER

BBC Trust chairman Lord Patten is backing the family of Kenilworth journalist Russell Joslin – insisting any inquiry into bullying allegations before his death must be “appropriately independent”.

Former colleagues of Mr Joslin, who worked for BBC Coventry & Warwickshire, have also called for an independent inquiry.

It comes during an ongoing BBC-commissioned inquiry overseen by independent HR professional Lesley Granger – who worked for the BBC for a decade until 2008 – and concerns that staff feel they could risk their jobs by giving evidence. Mr Joslin, aged 50, is believed to have committed suicide at St Michael's psychiatric hospital, in Warwick, last month, three days after stepping in front of a bus in Kenilworth.

Texts on his phone showed his torment at the way BBC managers had responded to his allegations of bullying, sexual harassment by a former female colleague, and feeling sidelined.

Now Lord Patten, who heads the BBC Trust, which is charged with holding BBC executive management to account, has replied to a letter from justice



LETTER: Lord Patten. Right, BBC journalist Russell Joslin who died last month



minister and Kenilworth MP Jeremy Wright, one of seven MPs backing family demands for an independent inquiry.

Mr Patten's letter states: “The trust recognises that it is vital that in circumstances such as these, the BBC takes appropriate action to investigate fully the events surrounding Mr Joslin's complaints.

“It is right for such an investigation to be commissioned initially by the BBC executive, and the trust agrees that the executive must take the steps necessary to ensure the inquiry is appropriately independent and that staff can have confidence in the arrangements made for providing evidence to it.”

Lord Patten has instructed BBC HR director Lucy Adams to explain to Mr Wright in more detail what approach BBC managers have taken with the Granger inquiry. His letter continues:

“The trust will of course taken a keen interest in the outcome of any investigations into these tragic events and will want assurances not only that the investigation is thorough and has adequate access to relevant evidence, but also that the executive takes any appropriate action once the review's conclusions are known.”

Lord Patten also welcomed a pledge by BBC managers to make its inquiry findings public.

Meanwhile, a copy of the letter was sent by culture secretary Maria Miller to Coventry South MP Jim Cunningham. She added the government should not intervene as the BBC is “operationally independent”.

But she told Mr Cunningham she was writing to Lord Patten, to ensure he is aware of the MP's concern, and “the importance that you attach to the independence of this inquiry”.

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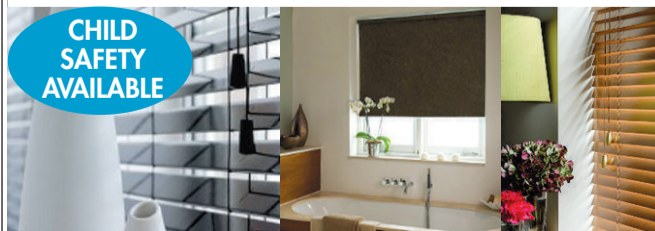
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