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Latest news

Orde to provide Jordan killing files to coroner

Andersonstown News Monday

By Aine McEntee

PSNI Chief Constable Hugh Orde's legal bid to stop files on the police shooting of an unarmed West Belfast IRA volunteer being opened to the coroner has failed.

The North's top cop, who had been resisting an order to hand over the investigating officer's report into Pearse Jordan's death nearly 16 years ago, has been told by a High Court judge he must hand them over. Speaking from the family home, Hugh and Teresa Jordan welcomed the ruling.

"It is a big step, it's another hurdle we've overcome to get the truth," said Hugh.

"But for us there will be other big decisions to come when the inquest finally happens. I don't care about who did it, they'll never do time anyway I just want to know why they did it.

"We want the record put straight, we want them to tell the truth."

Hugh Orde's application for leave to seek a judicial review of Coroner John Leckey's attempts to gain access to the documents ahead of a long-delayed inquest next January was dismissed at the High Court in Belfast on Friday (September 19).

Mr Justice Morgan ruled that no arguable case with a prospect of success had been put forward, despite lawyers for the Chief Constable insisting that the files were based on an individual officer's subjective analysis.

Twenty-one-year-old Pearse was driving along the Falls Road when his car was rammed by police in 1992.

Dazed, he got out of the car and was shot three times in the back by the RUC. He died a short time later.

Making his decision, Justice Morgan said: "Although each document contains matters of opinion, comment, assessment, conclusion and

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Leading South Belfast restaurateur Michael Deane toasts his inclusion in the Belfast Media Group's fourth annual Belfast Business Top 50 listing. The top chef will be recognised, along with 49 other recipients, at a glittering event in



recommendations, it is clear that the detailed analysis of the relevant material is likely to be extremely helpful to the coroner in defining the issues which he can expect to emerge in the hearing of the inquest.

“There is no basis for limiting the information to which the coroner is entitled by reference to whether it is factual, opinion or assessment.”

The decision represents a huge boost to the Jordan family who, working with victims’ group Relatives For Justice, have battled hard to gain access to the relevant police documents.

To get this far, the Jordan family have had to bring Pearse’s case before the courts nearly 130 times.

“Of course we feel drained,” Teresa said.

“It has taken it out of us, everybody tells us that. They tell us to go and get counselling.

“But we don’t want that. The support we get from family, friends and neighbours is all we need.”

“It has been invaluable,” Hugh added.

RFJ Director Mark Thompson said Justice Morgan’s decision ordering the Chief Constable to hand over the files to the coroner was the only right decision to make. “It’s 16 years later and the Jordan family have been to court nearly 130 times to find out what happened to Pearse.

“They have even been to Europe and the House of Lords who also ordered the police to provide the coroner with all relevant files.

“The PSNI have tried everything to stop anything reflecting badly on police getting out. That needs to stop, and the files must be handed over.

“We totally endorse the family’s position.

“It’s scandalous they have had to go to court so many times to find out what happened to their son,” he said.

“This is not a one-way process, this is a two-way process. Hugh Orde must earn the trust and confidence of the community and he can demonstrate that by co-operating fully with this inquest and providing the coroner and Jordan family with all the relevant details.”

PSNI boss Hugh Orde now has seven days to decide whether to challenge

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the judgment in the Court of Appeal.

Teresa and Hugh told the Andersonstown News that if Mr Orde does appeal the decision and wins, they cannot counter-appeal the outcome.

“It is not possible to comment on this enquiry today (Sunday),” a PSNI spokesman told the Andersonstown News, “however we will make any possible response as soon as we can.”