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THE PRIME MINISTER

28 June 2022

Dear Baroness Hallett,

Thank you for your letter of 12 May, setting out your proposals for refinements to the inquiry's terms of reference following the extensive consultation process which you led over the course of March and April.

As you set out in your letter, the consultation process identified a number of areas where you felt that the terms of reference could be improved, and I am content to accept all of the proposals you have made - subject only to a small number of clarificatory changes requested by the devolved administrations which have been discussed with your team.

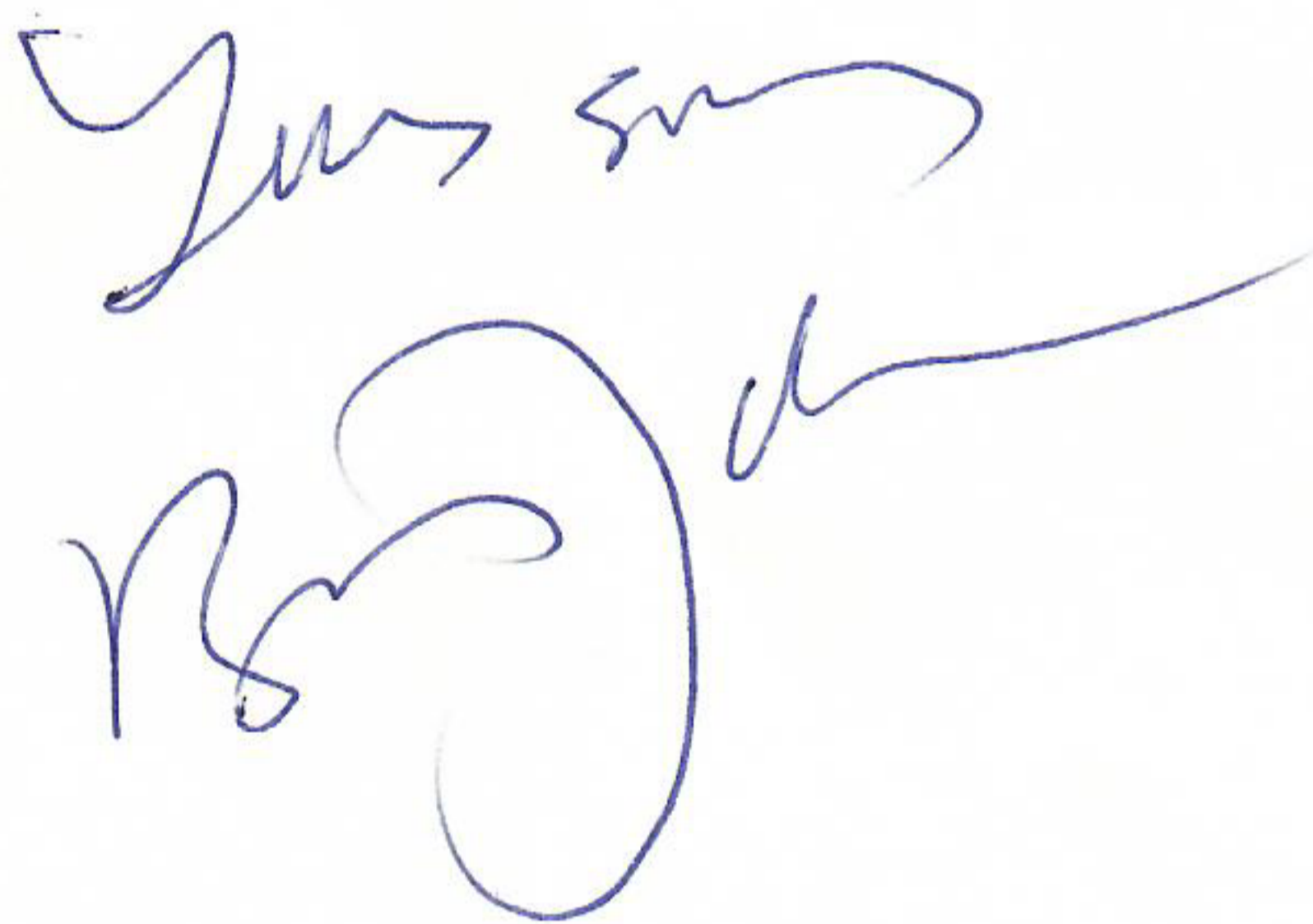
In accepting your changes in full, I note the addition of the word "*recorded*" to the requirement to investigate "*how decisions were made, communicated and implemented*". As above, I am content to accept this proposed change - but in doing so I would draw your attention to the fact that this is an area which is also under scrutiny from both the Information Commissioner's Office and the Court. In the interests of delivering the inquiry's findings and recommendations in a timely manner, there is - I would suggest - a need to avoid unnecessary duplication of that work, and I would encourage you to give this matter appropriate consideration as you plan your investigation.

I will now make a further Statement to Parliament confirming the inquiry's terms of reference. In doing so, I will confirm that the inquiry's "*setting up date*" for the purposes of the Act is today. My Statement will also confirm that it remains my intention to appoint further panel members in order that the inquiry has access to the full range of expertise needed to complete its important work. I will confirm - as the Inquiries Act requires - that I intend to appoint two such individuals.

I was grateful for our conversation on this issue and welcome the plans you set out for ensuring that the inquiry is equipped to deliver against what is undoubtedly a broad and challenging terms of reference. Nonetheless, my view remains as it did when we spoke prior to your appointment, that a wider panel will be best placed to meet the statutory requirement of "*necessary expertise*" and to address the huge breadth and complexity of the matters under consideration.

Finally, following consultation on this point with the devolved administrations, this letter also serves as written permission for you to use your formal powers under Section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005 in relation to devolved matters and evidence to be provided by Ministers in the devolved administrations - and serves as confirmation that the "*relevant part of the United Kingdom*" for the purposes of those provisions of the Inquiries Act that use this expression shall be England and Wales.

I wish you and the inquiry team well in your important work, and look forward to receiving your findings and recommendations.



The Right Honourable The Baroness Hallett DBE