



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION
MODULE 1 - EAST SUSSEX GROUP 1**

Introduction

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that Modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each module. On the same day, the Inquiry opened Module 1 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 16 August 2022.
2. The [Provisional Outline of Scope](#) for Module 1 provides that this module will examine the resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom for a Coronavirus pandemic. Further modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 09 August 2022 the Inquiry received an application from East Sussex Group 1 ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 1.
4. I made a provisional decision not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 1, thereby declining the application ("the Provisional Decision"), on 7 September 2022. The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 16 September 2022.
5. The Applicant did not renew the application by the prescribed deadline. Accordingly, this Notice sets out my final decision on the application.



Application

6. Applications for Core Participant status are considered in accordance with Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provides:

5.—(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.

(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether—

- (a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*
- (b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*
- (c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on—

- (a) the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- (b) the end of the inquiry.*

7. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I have considered whether the application fulfils the requirements of Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 1.

Summary of Application

8. The application is made by six individuals or families who put their application on the basis that they each had family members who died with Covid-19 recorded as their primary cause of death.



9. The applicants all live in East Sussex and make their application on the basis of their individual and collective interests as bereaved families geographically located in the same area. The applicants say that they want to know whether anything could have been done to prevent the deaths of their family members and so they have a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the Outline of Scope for Module 1 relates for the purposes of satisfying Rule 5(2)(b).

Decision for the Applicant

10. I wish to extend my deep sympathy to the individuals and families who have suffered loss.
11. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application. However, having done so, I have decided, in my discretion, not to designate the applicants as a Core Participant in Module 1 because the link between any potential failings in the UK's resilience and preparedness for the Covid-19 pandemic is too far removed from the particular circumstances of the deaths of their family members and it is not the purpose of the Inquiry, including Module 1, to explore individual deaths. For that reason, I consider that the application does not meet the criteria set out in Rule 5(2)(a) or (b) for the applicants' designation as Core Participants in Module 1 of the Inquiry.
12. I have, in my discretion, granted Core Participant status in Module 1 to a number of organised groups representing the interests of large numbers of bereaved family members of people who have died from Covid-19. However, this is because I consider that they are better placed to help the Inquiry to achieve its aims by representing the collective interests of a broad spectrum of those bereaved by Covid-19, having regard in particular to the need to manage the Inquiry effectively and efficiently. I am determined to run the Inquiry as thoroughly and as efficiently as possible, bearing in mind the Inquiry's wide-ranging terms of reference and the need for the Inquiry process to be rigorous and fair. Given the vast numbers of people who were involved



with, or adversely affected by, the Covid-19 pandemic, very many people in this country could potentially have an interest in it. I must therefore assess very carefully whether, in reality, applicants can assist the Inquiry.

13. I appreciate the disappointment that my decision will cause. However, it may be possible for the applicants' interests to be represented by one of the organised groups to which I refer above. If this is something that the applicants are interested in, the Solicitor to the Inquiry's team will be able to pass on the contact details for the appropriate group.
14. The Inquiry will also listen to and consider carefully the experiences of bereaved families and others who have suffered hardship or loss as a result of the pandemic, in the course of the listening exercise. I made clear in my Opening Statement that this listening exercise is a significant and important task which will lead to summary reports of the impact of the pandemic to be used as evidence during the Inquiry's module hearings. The Inquiry will publish further details about how the applicant will be able to participate in this way in due course.
15. For all of those reasons, having considered all of the information provided by East Sussex Group 1 in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 1, I consider that East Sussex Group 1 did not play a direct and significant role in relation to the matters sought to be investigated in Module 1, nor do they have a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 1 relates. I have therefore decided that East Sussex Group 1 should not be designated as Core Participants in Module 1 and I confirm that this is my final decision.
16. I will keep the scope of Module 1 under review. My decision not to designate East Sussex Group 1 as a Core Participant in Module 1 does not preclude them from making any further applications in respect of any later modules. I will consider any future



applications East Sussex Group 1 may wish to make on their merits at the time they are made.

Rt Hon Baroness (Heather) Hallett DBE

Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry

29 September 2022