



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION  
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION  
MODULE 1 - INDIVIDUAL BEREAVED FAMILY MEMBERS (OF THE COVID 19 BEREAVED  
FAMILIES FOR JUSTICE GROUP)**

**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 16 August 2022 the Inquiry received an application from the Covid 19 Bereaved Families for Justice Group ('the Applicant Group') and a 1,453 individual bereaved family members in their own right ("the Applicant Individuals") for Core Participant status in Module 1.
4. I have granted Core Participant status to the Applicant Group in Module 1. However, I made a provisional decision not to designate the Applicant Individuals as Core Participants in Module 1, thereby declining the application ("the Provisional Decision"), on 7 September 2022. The Applicant Individuals were 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 Applicant Individuals consist of families of deceased individuals represented by Broudie Jackson Canter Solicitors ('BJC Solicitors'), most of whom are supporters of the Applicant Group. The number of Applicant Individuals currently stands at 1,453



applications and the application explains that BJC Solicitors will supply a register of applicants in due course if requested. I understand from the application that this number is anticipated to rise significantly as the Inquiry process evolves and that BJC Solicitors envisages adding families to the register as appropriate in due course.

9. I wish to extend my deep sympathy to each of the supporters of the Applicant Group and each of the Applicant Individuals regarding the deaths of their loved ones.

### **Decision for the Applicant Individuals**

10. The Inquiry will listen to and consider carefully the experiences of bereaved families and others who have suffered hardship or loss as a result of the pandemic. 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 on those who come forward to be used as evidence during the Inquiry's module hearings. It will be run in such a way that as many people as possible who wish to share their experience may do so.
11. However, I am also 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 and not everyone can be granted Core Participant status for the purposes of the Inquiry hearings.
12. I have designated the Applicant Group as a Core Participant in Module 1. As with the Applicant Group, I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application, as well as the factors I have set out above. Having done so, I have decided, in my discretion, not to designate any of the 1,453 Applicant Individuals as Core Participants 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 Applicant Individuals as core participants in Module 1 of the Inquiry.

13. Having already designated the Applicant Group as a Core Participant for Module 1, I consider that the individual interests of the 1,453 Applicant Individuals are best represented by the Applicant Group, having regard to its ability to represent the collective interests of a broad spectrum of those bereaved by Covid-19 and also to the need to manage the Inquiry effectively and efficiently.
14. It is not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to contribute to the Inquiry. The Applicant Individuals will all have an opportunity to make important contributions to the Inquiry without being designated as Core Participants in Module 1, both through the listening exercise and the Applicant Group if they choose.
15. I will keep the scope of Module 1 under review. My decision not to designate each of the 1,453 Applicant Individuals as Core Participants in Module 1 does not preclude them from making any further applications on their behalf in respect of any later modules. Similarly, my decision to designate the Applicant Group as a Core Participant in Module 1 has no bearing on their Core Participant Status in any other module, for which the Applicant Group will have to make further applications for each module in due course.

**Rt Hon Baroness (Heather) Hallett DBE**  
**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**  
**3 October 2022**