



Rt. Hon Boris Johnson MP

24 May 2023

Dear Mr Johnson

Thank you for your letter dated today. I look forward to hearing from your new solicitor once their appointment has been confirmed.

The Inquiry has been corresponding with the Cabinet Office and Government Legal Department for a very considerable time in relation to requests for evidence, including from you. This has included protracted correspondence about the Cabinet Office's approach to redacting material from documents before they are supplied to the Inquiry, contrary to the Inquiry's [Protocol on the Redaction of Documents](#).

On 28 April 2023, the Chair of the Inquiry issued a notice under section 21(4) of the Inquiries Act 2005 compelling the production of certain unredacted documents from the Cabinet Office. These were documents which had already been requested under rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 and were due to be provided imminently. However, the Cabinet Office had stated that, contrary to the Inquiry's expectation and request, these documents would be provided not in clean form but with redactions applied. The documents in question included your notebooks and diaries during the period of the pandemic and also your potentially relevant WhatsApp communications. The Cabinet Office made an objection under section 21(4) of the Inquiries Act 2005 to that notice on 15 May 2023, seeking its revocation. On 22 May 2023, the Chair made a ruling in respect of that application and it is this Ruling, together with the notice and Cabinet Office's application, which the Inquiry is publishing today.

The Inquiry understands that you were legally represented by the Government Legal Department at all times when the Inquiry's requests and notice were issued, as well as at the time when the Cabinet Office made its representations under section 21(4). The extent to which these matters were canvassed with you by your solicitors and counsel during this time is a matter between you and them, but the Government Legal Department certainly told me it was making efforts to contact the individuals whose materials were identified in the notice to inform them as soon as possible when the notice was issued.

The Chair has now ruled on the Cabinet Office's application and her Ruling and accompanying documents will be published on the Inquiry's website shortly. This is in accordance with the Chair's obligations of openness contained in section 18 of the Inquiries Act 2005. The Inquiry will also publish your letter alongside these documents, together with this response.

Yours sincerely

Martin Smith

**Solicitor to the Inquiry**

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