

Annex F - Solicitor to the Inquiry Update Note - Listening Exercise and Commemoration

Further to my previous notes about the Inquiry's plans in respect of a listening exercise and for commemoration, I write with the following update.

1. Every Story Matters

- 1.1. The listening exercise will be known as 'Every Story Matters.' The Chair chose this name following feedback the Inquiry obtained from organisations and from testing with both a nationally representative sample of 1000 adults and via focus groups with those impacted by the pandemic.
- 1.2. The Inquiry has worked with its suppliers Ipsos and M&C Saatchi to progress the design of Every Story Matters. It has also consulted 80 external organisations, around the UK, representing groups most impacted by the pandemic.
- 1.3. The Inquiry is looking to procure several new contracts to support the delivery of the next phase of the listening exercise. It is likely to include research and analytics, communications and community engagement suppliers.
- 1.4. Every Story Matters aims to offer an open and inclusive way for people to share their experience. The Inquiry is looking at different ways for people to share their story such as the webform, and an offer for those with access needs of phone line assistance and a paper option. It wishes to hold community listening events across the UK during the lifetime of the listening exercise. This will include sessions attended by the Chair and other members of Inquiry staff.
- 1.5. The Inquiry will also take a more targeted approach to listening to ensure that it is hearing from seldom heard groups in line with its Terms of Reference. This will include working with local organisations and groups to reach these audiences.
- 1.6. Every Story Matters will take a trauma informed approach to gathering people's experiences. This will include bespoke training for all staff who conduct the interviews, so they are clear what trauma is, how it may present and how to apply this knowledge for these specific conversations.
- 1.7. Emotional support will be available via an emotional support phone line, for those sharing their experiences directly with trained researchers and will be promoted directly to participants.
- 1.8. For those submitting their experiences through the refreshed webform later in the Spring names and email addresses will not be collected. However, the webform will collect some personally identifiable information, to allow the Inquiry to gather statistics on webform usage, enable people to 'save and

continue' their submission, and give people the 'right to withdraw' their submission from the research. This will be set out clearly online in the privacy notice.

- 1.9. Experiences will be gathered and analysed by research and analysis companies to ensure that the conclusions are methodologically robust. Reports will be produced for each relevant module investigation, and will be submitted as evidence which will be disclosed and published as part of the Inquiry's module hearings. This will help the Inquiry obtain as broad an evidence base about the impact of the pandemic as possible, to assist it in reaching robust findings and recommendations.

2. Communications

- 2.1. Public communications are needed to engage people across all four nations of the UK and equip them with the knowledge and motivation to take part in Every Story Matters. The Inquiry requires specialist communication expertise to help it determine the best way to engage people to share their experiences, especially from those who are under-represented or not always heard.
- 2.2. The appointed communication supplier will not be carrying out any of the listening or see any of the experiences shared by individuals. This will be handled by the Inquiry and its appointed research and analysis supplier and will be completely separate from the communications necessary to promote Every Story Matters.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. The Inquiry will procure the services it needs to deliver Every Story Matters through Crown Commercial Service, which provides commercial expertise to a wide number of public and third sector organisations. It provides the Inquiry with a quick and cost-effective route to market through a pre-approved framework of suppliers enabling the Inquiry to secure the services it needs to deliver this aspect of its work.
- 3.2. It would not be lawful or part of a proper procurement process to exclude any particular company from being on the framework or bidding for work if they wish to do so. The Inquiry will however seek assurances from any potential supplier that they declare conflicts of interest and show processes they could put in place to avoid any conflicts in the event they were successful in the procurement.
- 3.3. These new contracts will replace the Inquiry's initial contracts with M&C Saatchi and Ipsos.

4. Commemoration

- 4.1. The Inquiry has been exploring options for commemorative content online, in the hearings themselves, and in the form of a physical installation at the Hearing Centre.
- 4.2. The Inquiry spoke to several external organisations - including a number of Core Participants - towards the end of 2022, to understand different perspectives and views on what this activity needs to achieve and discuss some early ideas. It is very grateful for all of the input received.
- 4.3. The Chair has reviewed the options and decided a tapestry should be created as a physical installation at the Hearing Centre comprising an initial 15 panels. Each panel will be created by a different artist, working with a particular community or communities to develop it. The intention is for the first panels to be unveiled at the Inquiry's Hearing Centre in due course in time for the first public hearings in May.
- 4.4. As well as being transportable across the UK, the tapestry has the potential to grow and be added to over the lifetime of the Inquiry. The Inquiry is also exploring options to allow people to access the tapestry digitally, via the Inquiry website, to take the tapestry to wider audiences than those who attend the Inquiry's proceedings in person.
- 4.5. It is also developing video content to be played at the start of the first Module 1 public hearing in May to help set it in the context of the hardship and loss the pandemic caused. Different videos are being planned to be played at the start of the public hearings for each of the subsequent modules, the idea being that their content will be relevant to the module concerned.
- 4.6. These short videos will feature people talking about the impact that the pandemic has had upon them. The Inquiry hopes to reflect a diverse range of experience from those who suffered hardship and loss in a way that is both respectful and appropriate.
- 4.7. Over the next few months, the Inquiry will be working to progress both the tapestry and the video content. It welcomes the involvement of core participants in this work and has already requested assistance from the Bereaved Families for Justice groups.

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