



**RULING ON AN APPLICATION MADE ON BEHALF OF
SIR PATRICK VALLANCE**

1. On 27 July 2023 Sir Patrick Vallance, in response to a request by the Module 2 Inquiry legal team, provided the Inquiry with a copy of notes that he prepared during the response to the pandemic. These notes are described within Sir Patrick's witness statement as jottings prepared to protect his mental health, written as a form of release during a period of intense pressure. He stated that the notes were 'never intended to see the light of day or to be read by anyone'.
2. In recognition of the clear relevance of the notes to the Inquiry's terms of reference, and in particular to the scope of Module 2, the Inquiry legal team prepared a transcription of the handwritten notes. Redactions were applied by the Inquiry legal team, in accordance with the Inquiry's Protocol on the Redaction of Documents, to content it considered was both sensitive and irrelevant to the scope of Module 2.
3. On 12 October 2023 the legal representatives of Sir Patrick Vallance made an application to the Inquiry ("the Application"). The Application requested that only individual extracts from the transcribed notes, rather than (as per the Inquiry's standard practice) full pages of the transcripts, be put to witnesses in questioning and then published. It was claimed that publishing the entire page on which a quotation appeared would not be justified, given the interference with Sir Patrick's article 8 ECHR rights.
4. I heard oral submissions from a number of Core Participants on 16 October 2023 (see transcript [Day 10/96-122](#)) and received written submissions from representatives of the media. By way of an interim decision, on 19 October 2023 I ruled (see transcript [Day 13/112-114](#)) that the Inquiry should adduce and publish specific extracts only (one per page) in lieu of fuller submissions. It was thought at that time that the Inquiry might face calls for the full transcript to be published. The interim procedure has been

followed by the Inquiry since that date, save where express consent has been sought and obtained from Sir Patrick to refer a witness to a whole page of the transcription of the notes for context.

5. I have continued to reflect on the Application during the course of the Module 2 evidence hearings. I have considered in particular whether the Inquiry should publish the full transcripts of Sir Patrick's notes. I have received no calls to adopt that approach and I do not consider it necessary or proportionate to do so.
6. On 7 December 2023 Solicitors to the Inquiry informed Core Participants of my provisional view that the interim procedure, i.e. the publication only of extracts of the notes which have been adduced in evidence, should be maintained. I considered that this course has worked in practice and that it strikes an appropriate balance between Sir Patrick's rights and the need to ensure that the Inquiry adduces relevant material. Core Participants were invited to make written submissions in response, but none were received. Representatives of the media (from whom I received submissions when I considered this issue in October) were also asked to submit any representations they wished to make but, as with Core Participants, they chose not to do so.
7. Accordingly, my substantive ruling on the Application is that the interim procedure will be adopted as a permanent measure for the purposes of Module 2. Publication of Sir Patrick's notes will be limited to the individual extracts that have been adduced in evidence. Many such extracts have, of course, already been published. It is possible that the Inquiry will adduce (and thereafter publish) further extracts that are considered necessary for the purposes of either Core Participants' written closing submissions or the Inquiry's report.

The Right Honourable Baroness Hallett
Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry
14 December 2023