

1. A brief overview of your qualifications, career history, professional expertise and major publications.

My name is Paul Netherton OBE, MBA, BSc Hons. I was the Deputy Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police 2018 - 2021 and was the National Police Chiefs' Council's lead for Civil Contingencies under the Operations portfolio from 2018 to 2021. I retired from the Police in April 2021. I chaired the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LRF (Local Resilience Forum) between 2010 and 2021 and chaired the South West Regional Strategic Coordinating Group (ReSCG) during the Covid pandemic. I was awarded an OBE for my work in 2020 and, in relation to my work during the Covid pandemic, was made an international honorary member of the Faculty of Public Health.

In March 2020 I was involved in setting up and chaired the Covid Foresight Group. This brought together Government departments, academics through Nottingham Trent University (NTU) - and civil contingency experts from across the UK including all the Local Resilient Forums and produced numerous documents in support of the Covid response. This group was formed in order to provide support to the UK Government and the resilience community during the Covid Pandemic.

The Foresight Group also carried out three major reviews of the LRF response to the pandemic, producing detailed and evidenced feedback to improve the UK's response to the pandemic. This was the first time such an endeavour was done during a major incident and a detailed set of recommendations was created and submitted to MHCLG (as it was then, now DLUHC) and CCS.

From September 2020 I was seconded in to the Home Office and was the police representative on the Home Office Covid Directorate meetings. The work I was undertaking required full time commitment at a level that was incompatible with also continuing in my role as deputy chief constable. During the secondment I worked on aspects of vaccine security, held the chair of the Foresight Group and also the NPCC response, Operation Talla. This secondment ran until March 2021.

2. A list of the groups (i.e. SAGE and/or any of its sub-groups) in which you have been a participant, and the relevant time periods.

I understand that I am listed as a participant on the Scientific Pandemic Insights Group on Behaviours (SPI-B), one of the SAGE sub-groups. I don't recollect attending meetings of that particular group but certainly the work of the Foresight Group fed into that forum, as well as into SAGE. This work ran from Feb/March 2020 through to April 2021 and 76 documents were produced.

From September 2020 to March 2021 I was one of three police advisers to the Home Office on the Vaccine Security Group. I also attended a number COBR, Parliamentary Select Committee/s and Home Secretary briefings. I also attended the Home Office Covid Directorate meetings whilst seconded to the Home Office.

3. An overview of your involvement with those groups between January 2020 and February 2022, including:

- a. When and how you came to be a participant;**
- b. The number of meetings you attended, and your contributions to those meetings;**
- c. Your role in providing research, information and advice.**

See my response to Q1 and Q2 above.

4. A summary of any documents to which you contributed for the purpose of advising SAGE and/or its related subgroups on the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

I am aware that the NPCC is a core participant in module 1 of the Inquiry and has applied for CP status in relation to module 2. The NPCC will provide a full summary of the materials created and held both locally by Devon and Cornwall Police and also through the national policing operational response called Operation Talla.

The Foresight group papers are held by Nottingham Trent University and are open source. Here is the link to the publications: <https://bit.ly/C19NFG>

This includes the papers from the three formal reviews of LRF response during Covid and the action plans that came from these reviews.

5. A summary of any articles you have written, interviews and/or evidence you have given regarding the work of the above-mentioned groups and/or the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

See attached submission for the Integrated Resilience review (to the Cabinet Office in September 2020) and submission for evidence for the National Resilience Strategy (to the Home Secretary in April 2021).

6. Your views as to whether the work of the above-mentioned groups in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic (or the UK's response more generally) succeeded in its aims.

This may include, but is not limited to, your views on:

- a. The composition of the groups and/or their diversity of expertise;**
- b. The way in which the groups were commissioned to work on the relevant**

issues;

c. The resources and support that were available;

d. The advice given and/or recommendations that were made;

e. The extent to which the groups worked effectively together;

f. The extent to which applicable structures and policies were utilised and/or complied with and their effectiveness

My main response to the above is outlined in the two submissions which I have attached (see 5 above). See also the review of the LRF and the action plan coming out of that.

In my view, and specifically in relation to sub para f above, the LRF structure and units such as the CCS within Cabinet Office, and those within MHCLG, were not utilised and this avoided the governance that was in place and designed to operate in response to a pandemic.

7. Your views as to any lessons that can be learned from the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular relating to the work of the above-mentioned groups. Please describe any changes that have already been made, and set out any recommendations for further changes that you think the Inquiry should consider making.

See my submissions in the two attached documents, as at 5 above.

There were numerous documents and papers written as part of the Foresight work that I was involved with, reviewing activity during the pandemic (this was the first time such work had ever been undertaken) and subsequently following the pandemic - papers and considerations with recommendations and action plans.

In addition I am happy to provide my thoughts and feedback on other areas that I was involved in, such as the pre-Covid landscape, learning from Ex Cygnus, guidance for frontline workers, test and trace policy and vaccine rollout, that don't seem to be required at this time within this particular request but appear to be at the centre of issues that the Inquiry may look at.

8. A brief description of documentation relating to these matters that you hold (including soft copy material held electronically). Please retain all such material. I am not asking for you to provide us with this material at this stage, but I may request that you do so in due course.

See my response to Q4 above.

I obviously am very happy to support the inquiry and have a considerable amount of information and views to provide but, as I am now retired, the NPCC will assist the Inquiry with explaining the material that is available and providing evidence that may be required.

Paul Netherton OBE
10 October 2022