

Witness Name: James Rubin

Statement No.: 2

Exhibit: JR/195

Dated: 27 October 2023

Ref: M2/SAGE/01/JR

## UK COVID-19 INQUIRY – MODULE 2

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### SUPPLEMENTARY WITNESS STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR JAMES RUBIN

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I, James Rubin, will say as follows: -

**1: Introduction:**

- 1.1. I make this statement further to my witness statement dated 21 August 2023 and my oral evidence on 18 October 2023.

**2: Media Engagement by SPI-B Participants**

- 2.1. On 18 October 2023 Inquiry Counsel Andrew O'Connor KC asked me the following in relation to paragraph 10.3(2) of my witness statement:

*“Yes. Then below that, another is -- I don't want to get into the detail of that one, save to point out that what you are describing here is an incident where actual details of SPI-B discussions were revealed to the press, contrary to the agreement you say had been reached amongst members of the committee?”* (Lines 1 to 6, Folio 48, of the Transcript for 18 October 2023)

- 2.2. I subsequently provided the following response:

*“Yes, and I did discuss this with Professor West, and my understanding is it was a -- he appreciated that he shouldn't have made the comments in the way that he did, and we accepted that and we moved on from it, but – but yes.”* (Lines 7 to 11, Folio 48, of the Transcript for 18 October 2023)

- 2.3. Following the conclusion of my evidence, Professor West has contacted me about this. I can see from our email exchange dated 27 May 2020 regarding interviews to the press {JR/195 – INQ000197130}, that he explained to me at the time:

*“...I do of course always say to journalists that I'm speaking in a personal capacity but it doesn't always get transmitted. I did tweet it when I saw the article but of course but that had relatively limited coverage.*

*On the matter of reporting discussion, I was intending only to refer to those of us who had already spoken out publicly and obviously not the group as a whole or indeed discussions at our meetings. The phrase 'Those of us ...' would have been much better as 'Some of us ...' to help avoid creating the wrong impression.”*

- 2.4. Having been reminded of the above, I apologise for incorrectly suggesting that Professor West shared details of SPI-B discussions with the media. This was not the case, and I would be grateful if this supplementary statement can be included as part of my evidence to record the correct version of events.
- 2.5. I apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause the Chair to the Inquiry.

### **Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

**Signed:**

**Personal Data**

**Dated:** 27 October 2023