

## **IN THE UK COVID-19 INQUIRY**

**Before the Right Honourable Baroness Hallett D.B.E.**

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### **MODULE 5 - THE WELSH GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT**

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1. This is the written submission on behalf of the Welsh Government for the module 5's first preliminary hearing on 6 February 2024.
2. We are grateful to the STI and CTI for their notes circulated in advance of the preliminary hearing. The Welsh Government welcomes its designation as a core participant for module 5 and re-affirms its full commitment to the Inquiry. It will continue to provide the fullest possible co-operation, so that the decisions it took, and those taken by others, in response to the pandemic are thoroughly scrutinised. Work has already started and the Welsh Government has given its initial responses to the Inquiry's requests for preliminary information.
3. The Welsh Government has responsibility for developing and implementing procurement policy in Wales. The Welsh Government publishes Welsh Public Procurement Policy Notes ("**WPPNs**"), which provide guidance to assist Welsh public bodies to procure goods, works and services in compliance with procurement legislation.
4. During the period which will be examined by the Inquiry, the Welsh Government also worked with the UK Cabinet Office to develop Procurement Policy Notes ("**PPNs**") which could be adopted to respond to the covid emergency . PPNs are published periodically by the UK Cabinet Office and provide guidance on best practice in public sector procurement.

5. The Welsh Government worked with NHS Wales bodies and local authorities in respect of contractual provisions for the procurement and distribution of key healthcare equipment during the pandemic period.
6. NHS procurement is conducted through NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (“**NWSSP**”), which operates independently from the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government provided support in relation to public procurement issues which arose during the pandemic, particularly in relation to the supply and demand of PPE, helping to facilitate NHS procurement needs during the pandemic by ensuring regular communication between the relevant parties.
7. Working closely with the NWSSP, the Welsh Government established meetings during the early stages of the pandemic to discuss issues such as stock levels, likely demand, distribution of available stock and procurement of new supplies.
8. The Welsh Government will continue to assist the Inquiry’s investigations in module 5.

**Dated 30 January 2024**