



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION  
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION  
MODULE 6  
WELSH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

**Introduction**

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that Modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each module. On 12 December 2023 the Inquiry opened Module 6 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 19 January 2024.
2. On 16 January 2024 the Inquiry received an application from the Welsh Local Government Association for Core Participant status in Module 6. This application was made jointly with the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. This Notice sets out my determination of the application.
3. The Inquiry has published the [Provisional Outline of Scope](#) for Module 6, which states that this module will examine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the publicly and privately funded adult social care sector (the “Care Sector”) in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Further modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry’s Terms of Reference.

**Application**

4. Applications for Core Participant status are considered in accordance with Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provides:

*5.—(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether—*

*(a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*

*(b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*

*(c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on—*

*(a) the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*

*(b) the end of the inquiry.*

5. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I considered whether the application fulfils the requirements set out in Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 6.

### **Summary of Application**

6. The Welsh Local Government Association ("WLGA") represents 22 local authorities in Wales and the Welsh fire and rescue services and national park authorities are associate members. The WLGA speaks for all its members on matters of local government in general or matters which concern councils or associate members. The Applicant applies for joint CP status with the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors in Adult Social Services ("ADASS"). WLGA applies under Rule 5(a), (b) and (c) of the Inquiry Rules 2006.
7. During the pandemic, the Applicant states that it was central to facilitating dialogue with the Welsh Government, representing the views and experiences of those 'on the ground' as guidance and regulations were produced and updated. The Applicant, along with ADASS Cymru, played a key role in interpreting guidance into practice for care settings in Wales.

8. The Applicant submits that the WLGA and local authorities have first hand knowledge on the experiences of those in the care sector and how the pandemic impacted on it. The Applicant states that it played a leading role in communication and explanations to residents, staff and families, and advocated to the Welsh Government when things could have been improved.
9. The Applicant states that it played a direct and significant role in the issues concerning Module 6. Their application includes their knowledge and/or work on the concerns about the discharge of patients from hospital to care homes without testing, the initial testing regime, lack of PPE for social care staff, the blanket use of DNACPRs, infection prevention and isolation of residents, and the impact of Covid-19 on deaths in care homes. The Applicant states that it has a significant interest as it is the national voice representing local authorities in Wales. The Applicant played a central role in coordinating social care activities across Welsh councils, ensuring guidance was understood and adhered to, and critical equipment was supplied to front line services. Finally, the Applicant anticipates there may be criticisms of councils regarding the care sector during the pandemic.

### **Decision for the Applicant**

10. I have considered carefully this application and having done so, I have decided to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 6. The application is based on having played a direct and significant role in the matters to which Module 6 relates (Rule 5(2)(a)) and a significant interest in those matters (Rule 5(2)(b)).
11. Module 6 will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the publicly and privately funded adult Care Sector in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It will consider the impact on people's experience of the Care Sector, the structure of same, the key decisions in respect of the Care Sector and the management of the pandemic in adult care and residential homes, including discharge, IPC, testing, availability of PPE, use of DNACPRs and changes to the regulatory regime.
12. I consider that the Applicant played a direct and significant role in the Care Sector's response to the pandemic, satisfying Rule 5(2)(a) of the Inquiry Rules 2006, I am also satisfied that it has a significant interest in the matters to which Module 6 relates and

thus also satisfies Rule 5(2)(b). The application was made jointly with the LGA and ADASS and it is on this basis that I designate the Applicant as a Core Participant.

## **Legal Representation**

13. Applications for designation as the Recognised Legal Representative of a Core Participant are governed by Rules 6 and 7 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provide:

*6.—(1) Where—*

- (a) a core participant, other than a core participant referred to in rule 7; or*
- (b) any other person required or permitted to give evidence or produce documents during the course of the inquiry,*  
*has appointed a qualified lawyer to act on that person's behalf, the chairman must designate that lawyer as that person's recognised legal representative in respect of the inquiry proceedings.*

*7.—(1) This rule applies where there are two or more core participants, each of whom seeks to be legally represented, and the chairman considers that—*

- (a) their interests in the outcome of the inquiry are similar;*
- (b) the facts they are likely to rely on in the course of the inquiry are similar; and*
- (c) it is fair and proper for them to be jointly represented.*

*(2) The chairman must direct that those core participants shall be represented by a single recognised legal representative, and the chairman may designate a qualified lawyer for that purpose.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (4), any designation must be agreed by the core participants in question.*

*(4) If no agreement on a designation is forthcoming within a reasonable period, the chairman may designate an appropriate lawyer who, in his opinion, has sufficient knowledge and experience to act in this capacity.*

14. I am satisfied that the Welsh Local Government Association, ADASS and the Local Government Association have jointly appointed Thelma Stober of the Local Government Association as their qualified lawyer in relation to this Module. I therefore designate Thelma Stober as the recognised legal representative for the Welsh Local Government Association, ADASS, and the Local Government Association in accordance with Rule 6(1).

15. Directions will be given in relation to applications for an award under section 40(1)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005 of expenses to be incurred in respect of legal representation, at the forthcoming preliminary hearing. I will determine any such applications in accordance with the provisions of section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005, the Inquiry Rules 2006, the [Prime Minister's determination](#) under section 40(4) and the [Inquiry' Costs Protocol](#).

**Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE**

**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**

**8 February 2024**