

Questionnaire UK COVID-19 Inquiry: Module 2B - Rule 9 Request to Dr Sarah Jones - Reference: M2B/SJ/01

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

I qualified as an Environmental Health Officer in 1985, gained a Master of Public Health in 1994 and graduated from Cardiff University in 2009 with a PhD.

I worked as a local authority EHO for 17 years, as a consultant EHO in industry for 5 years, as a senior lecturer for undergraduate and post graduate environmental and public health degrees for 6 years and within academia for 3 years

The last 6 years I have been on secondment to Welsh Government working in the Health Protection Team which is part of Public Health Protection Directorate. My line manager is Peter Jones in Welsh Government, and my parent employer is the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

During the Pandemic I had an operational role within the Health Protection Team, this involved working closely with local environmental health and regional public health teams in their response to the Pandemic. I was part of a team who collated intelligence from local and regional groups in relation to:

- transmission within different community groups and settings and
- the implementation of guidance and informal and formal interventions.

This helped inform the development and revisions to guidance and regulations.

My primary areas of specialism include investigation, management and control of communicable disease, infection and prevention control intervention within community groups (special procedures, care homes and schools), occupational health and safety and food safety enforcement.

I have 2 significant publications associated with my PhD which are in the area of food safety.

2. A list of the groups (i.e., TAG and/or any of its subgroups) in which you have been a participant, and the relevant time periods. Please also confirm if you are or have been a participant in SAGE or other relevant groups.

Member of TAG from July 2020 to May 2022. This was the only scientific group I was a member of.

I was not a member of SAGE

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

a. When and how you came to be a participant.

I was invited by the Chair to attend TAG because of my operational involvement in the Covid response. My objective in attending TAG was to keep myself updated with the latest scientific findings, modelling outcomes and national surveillance data so that I could provide well informed advice to policy teams within Welsh Government and have better informed discussions with regional environmental and public health teams.

b. The number of meetings you attended, and your contributions to those meetings; and

I attended these meetings regularly but do not have records to confirm the actual number I attended. I was there primarily as an observer to support my operational role, occasionally I asked a question to clarify my understanding of an issue that was under discussion. I was not asked to present any papers.

c. Your role in providing research, information and advice.

I had no role in providing research, information or advice. I was there as an observer.

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

On a couple of occasions, upon request from the Chair I provided regional intelligence on specific community groups/settings. This information was included in TAG reports.

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 Welsh Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where publicly available.

All TAG Reports are held with the TAG team within Welsh Government.

6. Your views as to whether the work of the above-mentioned groups in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic (or Wales'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.

In the context of my involvement in this group as an observer my attendance at TAG fulfilled my objective in effectively discharging my operational role.

b. The way in which the groups were commissioned to work on the relevant issues.

c. The resources and support that were available.

I wasn't involved in this

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

I wasn't involved in this

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

From my perspective as an observer and supporting me in fulfilling my operational role in the Covid response TAG was effective.

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

I wasn't involved in this

7. Your views as to any lessons that can be learned from the Welsh Government'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.

None

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.

The documentation is held centrally by Dr Rob Orford's Team.