

Witness Name: Julie Morgan MS

Statement No: 2 for M2B

Exhibits: 1

Dated: August 1st 2024

## UK COVID-19 INQUIRY

### WITNESS STATEMENT OF JULIE MORGAN MS

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I, Julie Morgan MS, provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 and dated 10 June 2024.

#### Background

1. On Tuesday 7 May 2024, Nation Cymru published an online article titled "Vaughan Gething misled UK Covid Inquiry by not admitting he deleted messages"; the article is exhibited as **JMO/02-01/INQ000479033**.
2. The Nation Cymru article refers to messages sent on 17 August 2020, which was part of an iMessage chain between Welsh Labour Party Member of the Senedd, all of whom were Cabinet Ministers at the time. I can confirm I was a member of that iMessage chain.
3. The iMessage group was created on 17 August 2020 and the final message was also sent on 17 August 2020. The first part of the chain refers to an anticipated announcement about exam grading and the last few messages (from 15.59pm onwards) refer to a Labour group meeting that was taking place. The final message was sent shortly after 17.06pm.
4. In paragraphs 19 and 20 of my Module 2B Witness Statement - **INQ000371581**, I outlined the WhatsApp groups and message chains that I was a member of and these have been made available to the Inquiry.
5. On 13 May 2024, I received the Inquiry's request asking whether I was a member of the iMessage group and had access to any of the messages sent in the iMessage chain. Officials working in the Welsh Government's Inquiry team responded on my

behalf on 22 May 2024 and confirmed that I was a member of the chain, and I had access to the iMessage chain.

6. I have been asked to explain why I did not disclose this particular message chain to the Inquiry in response to previous requests.
7. The way that I work is not reliant on the use of my mobile phone. I would often receive messages or be invited to groups, but I would not always proactively respond. In this regard, I do not consider myself to be technically minded at all.
8. It was only when I received the request from the Public Inquiry dated 13 May 2024 and I interrogated my phone for that specific chain that I became aware of it on my phone. I do not recall receiving the iMessage chain on 17 August 2020 or reading the content of the chain at that time. I did not participate in the chain, and I was surprised to have located it on my phone.
9. I accept that I should have undertaken a more extensive search and have been more proactive in interrogating my phone when I received the original request. I have done so now, and I have identified additional messages that may be relevant to the original Rule 9 request, and I have provided these messages to the Inquiry. At the time the original request was received and because I am not technically minded, I asked for support from my private office with interrogating my phone, but they did not determine relevance, that was a decision for me. As I said, my technical ability in respect of mobile phones is limited and I was not able to fully assist the interrogation process. Since receiving the supplemental Rule 9, I have, with help from my constituency office, thoroughly examined my phone and I deeply regret not having done this previously.

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:

August 1st 2024