



## Message from the Chair of the Inquiry



Welcome to the UK Covid-19 Inquiry's November newsletter. Yesterday we [published the Inquiry's second report](#), following my [investigation into core decision-making and political governance across the four nations of the UK \(Modules 2ABC\)](#). I heard from a wide range of people including senior politicians, scientists, advisers and some of those impacted by Covid. I found that the response of all four governments of the UK was a case of 'too little, too late'. The initial response to the pandemic was marked by a lack of information and a lack of urgency and the devolved governments in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland were too reliant on the UK government to lead the response. All four governments failed to appreciate the scale of the threat or the urgency of response it demanded in the early part of 2020.

[This latest report](#) brings together my findings and recommendations following evidence gathered over the course of Module 2 including hearings in each nation for [Module 2 \(UK\)](#), [2A \(Scotland\)](#), [2B \(Wales\)](#) and [2C \(Northern Ireland\)](#). This will be the Inquiry's largest report. Future reports will include findings and recommendations relating to [our other investigations](#).

This report recommends fundamental reforms to the structures and processes used by the UK government and devolved administrations during civil emergencies. In all, I make 19 key recommendations that I believe will better protect the UK in any future pandemic and improve decision making in a crisis.

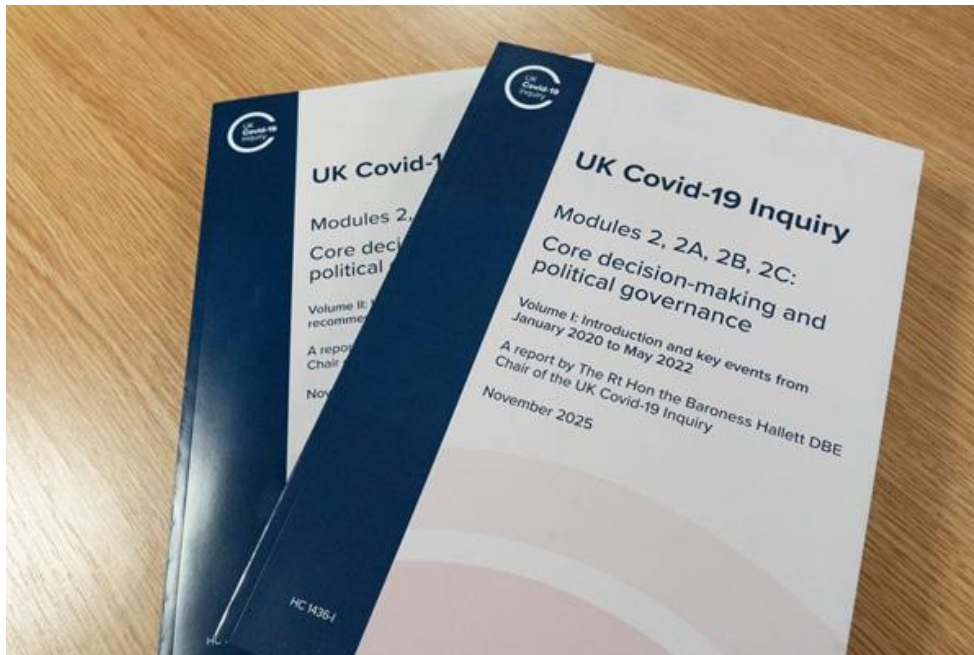
I expect that all recommendations will be implemented in a timely manner. I have [published a process that sets out how I will monitor the implementation of recommendations](#).

I have stated repeatedly my determination to publish my findings as promptly as possible after the conclusion of each of my ten investigations, rather than waiting until the end of the Inquiry. This means the governments of the UK can act on critical lessons **now** to strengthen the four nations' emergency preparedness, while the Inquiry's work continues. By the end of



this year we will have completed nine of our ten module hearings; more reports will be published throughout 2026 and early 2027. The Inquiry's final set of hearings, investigating the impact on society (Module 10), will start in February and conclude in early March 2026.

### **The Inquiry publishes recommendations into core UK decision making and political governance**



The Inquiry's second report follows its investigation into core decision making and political governance across the whole of the UK.

The report is [published on our website and can also be downloaded as a PDF document](#). We have also published an [‘In Brief’ summary of the recommendations](#), available in the following formats:

- Welsh
- English Easy Read
- Video animation (including British Sign Language)
- Audio only

The Chair has also outlined her findings and recommendations in a [video statement which is available to watch online](#). Further statements are available specifically for each devolved nation:

- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

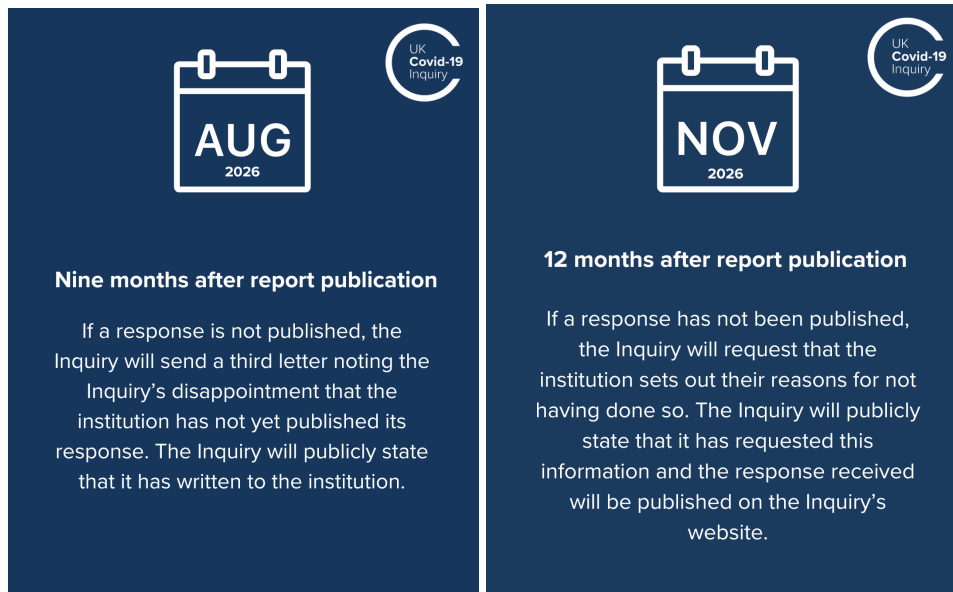


The report makes 19 key recommendations. These include the need for urgent reform and clarification of the structures for decision-making during emergencies within each of the four governments. Other key recommendations include ensuring that decisions and their implications are clearly communicated to the public - laws and guidance must be easy to understand. There should be greater Parliamentary scrutiny of the use of emergency powers as well as improved consideration in an emergency of the impact that decisions might have on those most at risk.

This follows from the [previously published report on resilience and preparedness for a pandemic \(Module 1\)](#). Separate reports about the impact on healthcare systems and vaccines and therapeutics will be published in Spring 2026. Future reports on adult social care, children and young people, procurement, financial support and other topics will follow.

The Chair will be monitoring the implementation of recommendations by requiring the institutions to which recommendations are directed (which for Module 2 are the 4 governments in the UK) to report progress on implementation, as per the process outlined in the following graphics:





*Above: outline of the Inquiry's recommendation monitoring process*

## Hearings for the Inquiry's ninth investigation into economic response to the pandemic begin

On Monday 24 November, the Inquiry will commence public hearings for its [ninth investigation, which will examine the economic response to the pandemic](#). This investigation will explore the following areas:

- **Economic interventions:** Job retention schemes, self-employment support, business loans, grants, rates relief and funding for public services and voluntary sector
- **Decision making structures:** How economic decisions were made and coordinated across UK government, devolved administrations and local government, including exchange of information and expert advice
- **Funding sources:** How interventions were funded and how allocated funds were identified or generated
- **Policy development:** Criteria and objectives for identifying interventions, timing decisions, and consideration of equality impacts on vulnerable groups
- **Delivery mechanisms:** How support was implemented, monitored for effectiveness, targeted appropriately and assessed for equality of impact
- **Ending support:** How and when decisions were made to end support programmes
- **Financial safeguards:** Measures taken to protect public money, manage risk, and prevent fraud or erroneous claims

An impact film, featuring people from across the UK who were financially affected by the pandemic, will be shown on the first day of hearings. Impact films set the context and tone of



public hearings, ensuring proceedings are grounded in real life experience. These films play an important role in setting the hearings within the context of the human impact of the pandemic.

Hearings are open to members of the public to attend. There are 41 seats available in the public gallery in the hearing room, in addition to a number of seating options available throughout the Inquiry's London hearing centre. [Information about how to reserve seats can be found on our website](#). You can also livestream our hearings on the [Inquiry's YouTube channel](#), subject to a three-minute delay. All livestreams are available to watch later.

The Module 9 hearings timetable will be published on our [website](#), each Thursday for the week ahead, starting from Thursday 20 November. Please note timings are provisional and subject to change.

We send out weekly updates via email during our public hearings, summarising key topics and who appeared as witnesses. You can sign up for these from the [newsletter page of the website](#).

On the first day of hearings the Inquiry will also publish its sixth [Every Story Matters record](#) detailing the experiences of people who were financially impacted by the pandemic. This will be available to view on the website and as a PDF download. A summary will also be published, including accessible versions in English Easy Read, Welsh and British Sign Language.