

Introduction to the Inquiry

Hello, my name is Lady Poole. I'm a judge of the Supreme Courts of Scotland, and I'm the Chair of the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry.

In early 2020 many of us had never heard of Covid-19. That changed rapidly. On the 1st of March 2020 the first coronavirus case in Scotland was confirmed, and on the 11th of March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 to be a global pandemic.

Since then, enormous numbers of people have been infected by Covid-19, and worldwide, millions have died. Responding appropriately to the Covid-19 pandemic has been a huge challenge.

In Scotland, all of us have been affected by the pandemic and the measures taken to handle it. The suffering and hardship experienced by many is unprecedented.

Covid-19 has left loss, heartbreak and tragedy in its wake. I want to take this opportunity to express my condolences to all those who have suffered, particularly to those who lost people they love.

People have legitimate questions about the handling of the pandemic in Scotland. This inquiry has been set up to provide answers.

My role as Chair of the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry is to investigate aspects of the devolved response to the pandemic in Scotland, and report about lessons learned. I have a team of people to

help me with this challenging task. We are an independent inquiry, and will carry out a fair, open and thorough investigation.

We will investigate the facts about the handling of the pandemic - to find out what lessons have been learned, both good and bad - and we will make recommendations for the future. The 12 areas we will investigate are set out in the [Terms of Reference](#) the Inquiry has been given. They cover important aspects of health, education, and other areas.

When the Inquiry is identifying lessons learned from the handling of the pandemic, the inquiry will take into account any adverse effects of the response on the exercise of human rights, including discrimination and equality rights.

We want the inquiry to lead to Scotland being better prepared, if something like this were ever to happen again.

Our website explains how we will go about the important task entrusted to us. It will contain [the latest news from the Inquiry](#) so you can keep up-to-date with our progress.

Thank you for listening and we hope you will help the Inquiry with its work.