

UK Covid-19 Inquiry in Edinburgh – Day 6

The UK Covid-19 Inquiry continues to sit in Edinburgh with hearings at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) before the Chair, Baroness Heather Hallett.

On Tuesday it was the turn of Professor Jason Leitch, CBE, National Clinical Director for The Scottish Government and Professor Devi Sridhar Professor of Global Public Health at the University of Edinburgh.

Much of today's evidence centred again around WhatsApp messages and what was deleted.

Professor Leitch said that he deleted the social media conversations in accordance with The Scottish Government's policy on using and retaining informal messaging.

He said: "As you've heard, the record retention policy was that you could use informal messaging systems for Scottish Government business.

"If you did, you should ensure that any advice or any decisions or anything that should be in the corporate record was then placed in that corporate record by email, briefing, etc, and then you should delete the informal messaging, and that's the guidance I followed."

Chair Lady Hallett asked Leitch: "There might be a suggestion that some of the messages – some of the people wanted to delete messages to avoid the messages being the subject of a

Freedom of Information request. That would be wrong, wouldn't it?"

Professor Leitch said: "Yes."

The Module 2A hearings will continue with evidence from Professor Mark Woolhouse and Professor Stephen Reicher on Wednesday morning and from Dr Pablo Grez and Professor Susan McVie in the afternoon.

On Friday the First Minister, Humza Yousaf will give evidence after the Secretary of State for Scotland Alister Jack MP and Elizabeth Lloyd who was Chief of Staff to former First Minister the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP.

[All sessions are broadcast on YouTube on the Covid-19 Inquiry channel which you can watch here.](#)

A transcript of the evidence given each day will appear [here on the Covid-19 Inquiry website.](#)

Members of the public can share their experiences of the pandemic directly with the Inquiry's Every Story Matters campaign. You can find out more about sharing your experience here: <https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters/>



23/1/2024 Picture Alan Simpson UK Covid-19 Inquiry at EICC
Professor Jason Leitch, CBE.



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