



Rt Hon Dame Diana Johnson DBE MP
Home Affairs Select Committee Chair
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

9 March 2022

CHAIR OF THE HOME OFFICE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

By email to: Homeaffcomm@parliament.uk

Dear Dame Diana,

Thank you for your letter of 28 February on the Undercover Policing Inquiry (UCPI). I have again taken each of your questions in turn and provided answers below for ease.

1. The letter acknowledges that you share my concern that the inquiry is taking longer than first anticipated and states that you have raised this issue with the Chair. Can you provide details of any actions that the Chair is taking to prevent further delays to the inquiry programme? In your opinion, is the breadth of the inquiry too large given the available resources?

The delivery of the Inquiry is the responsibility of the Chair and he is bound under the Inquiries Act 2005 to avoid unnecessary costs.

As I mentioned in my response of 10 January, the extent of the Inquiry's investigations is clearer now than it was in 2015, in particular, the Inquiry has had to consider thoroughly the privacy of individuals whilst ensuring it balances fulfilling its terms of reference to get to the truth of undercover policing.

I am engaging constructively with the Inquiry Chair and am content, from my discussions with the Chair, that the Inquiry is reviewing its programme to ensure delivery as promptly as possible.

2. You have said in your response that you hope to be able to provide an update on the timescale for a final report "soon". Can you clarify whether soon means in the next 3 months, next 6 months or by the end of 2022?

My officials and I remain in discussions with the Inquiry Chair in relation to an expedited timescale for the final report to be delivered. Confirmation of this timescale is subject to our ongoing consultation with the Inquiry and I assure you that I will provide an update as soon as I am able to.

3. It is understandable that inquiry costs will increase while evidence hearings are being held. For how long do you expect that evidence hearings for the inquiry will

be held?

It is a matter for the Inquiry Chair how he chooses to conduct his investigations and on what he would like to hear oral evidence. As indicated previously, the Inquiry is currently reviewing its programme.

The Inquiry continues to publish updates on its website and the most recent publication is in relation to the Inquiry's conduct of its next round of evidence hearings scheduled to take place from 9 May until 20 May 2022. This is available at: [Publications - Undercover Policing Inquiry \(ucpi.org.uk\)](https://www.ucci.org.uk/publications-undercover-policing-inquiry)

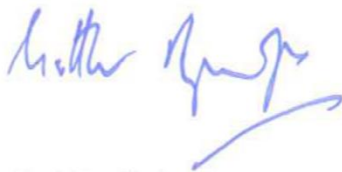
4. The Committee has had correspondence from a former police officer who has been waiting to give evidence to the inquiry for years. Very sadly, he now believes that due to ill health, and delays to the inquiry timeline, he may never have the opportunity to give evidence. To what extent has the UPI evaluated whether its chronological approach to taking evidence risks losing first hand testimony in later cases?

Under the Inquiries Act, the Chair is obliged to act with fairness in making decisions on the procedure and conduct of the Inquiry.

I fully empathise with the concerns of the former police officer and would urge him to contact the Inquiry directly to discuss his concerns about giving evidence.

Lastly, I have provided a breakdown of spending categories for the Inquiry in an Annex to this letter. I hope this is helpful and am pleased that the Committee is encouraged by the governance processes that the Home Office Sponsorship Unit and Senior Responsible Officer have in place with the Inquiry team. The progress and delivery of the Inquiry in line with Managing Public Money guidelines is a matter of importance to the Department and is a focus of ongoing discussions with the Inquiry Chair.

Yours sincerely,



**Matthew Rycroft CBE
Permanent Secretary**

Annex A: Undercover Policing Inquiry spending detail for FY 2021/22

2021/22 Costs (£s)		
	YTD Actual	FYF
Pay		
<i>Legal</i>	2,728,930	3,397,825
<i>Non-Legal Inc Chair</i>	2,211,424	2,655,200
Non-Pay		
<i>RLR</i>	1,079,954	1,245,812
<i>Estates</i>	1,108,161	1,189,199
<i>Running Costs Inc IT</i>	1,475,249	1,834,228
TOTAL	8,603,718	10,322,264

