



## Matt Hancock: Leaked messages suggest plan to frighten public

### Description

In a statement responding to the leaks, Mr Hancock said: “There is absolutely no public interest case for this huge breach. All the materials for the book have already been made available to the Inquiry, which is the right, and only, place for everything to be considered properly and the right lessons to be learned.

**The new leaked messages provide a startingly insight into the mentality of the Health Secretary as he planned to “deploy the new variant”.**



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# Inside Hancock's plan to 'frighten the pants off everyone' about Covid

The new leaked messages provide a startingly insight into the mentality of the Health Secretary as he planned to “deploy the new variant”.

By [CHARLES HARRISON](#)

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Matt Hancock's leaked texts provide an insight into the government's Covid strategy (Image: Getty)

Matt Hancock said he wanted to “frighten the pants off everyone” to convince them to obey coronavirus restrictions, newly leaked text messages suggest. Other messages from his aides also point to a plan to use “fear and guilt” in order to maintain lockdown.

The comments are the latest insight into the running of No10 during the coronavirus pandemic given by nearly 100,000 WhatsApp messages given by journalist Isabel Oakeshott to the [Telegraph](#). Ms Oakeshott supplied the outlet with the texts after being handed them by Mr Hancock to ghostwrite his biography, with the journalist breaking a non-disclosure agreement to do so.

In the latest messages, the former Health Secretary discussed how they could use the Kent variation of the virus to scare the public into obeying the rules.

A key concern at the time was that London Mayor Sadiq Khan could follow Andy Burnham – the mayor of Greater Manchester – into clashing with the Government over the imposition of stricter regulations.

Mr Hancock's adviser said: “Rather than doing too much forward signalling, we can roll pitch with the new strain.”

By CHARLES HARRISON

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