

The Southport Inquiry Financial Report

Overview

This document sets out the expenditure of The Southport Inquiry from 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026, the full financial year.

During this period the Inquiry held all the evidential hearings for Phase 1 and completed the drafting of the Phase 1 report, which was published on 13 April 2026.

The total expenditure for the full financial year 2025-2026 is **£6.241m** with the breakdown in the table below.

Category	£'000
Chair's fees	173
Secretariat salaries	465
Inquiry legal team	1,333
Counsel costs	838
Additional IT costs	1
S.40 award costs (legal fees)	1,273
Psychological support and safeguarding	106
Document Management	291
Expert witnesses & research	15
Venue hire	188
Office/ other rent costs	341
Other accommodation costs	85
Audio-visual & associated costs	827
Stakeholder engagement, communications & associated projects	126
Website costs	38
Expenses	107
Report	32
Other	2

Notes on financial figures

The Inquiry team has worked to ensure the figures presented are accurate as of 31 March 2026 to give an overview of the Inquiry's expenditure. However, these figures have not been compiled by accountants and are not intended to be equivalent to company accounts.

All figures are in thousands of pounds and exclude VAT, where applicable.

The Inquiry will be publishing its financial reports bi-annually. Background information relating to the expenditure categories can be found on pages 2 to 4 of this report. Further information about the work of the Inquiry can be found on our website. If you have any queries about this document, please contact info@southport.public-inquiry.uk

Background information

Chair's fees

The Chair of The Southport Inquiry, Sir Adrian Fulford, was appointed to the role by the Home Secretary on 4 April 2025. This cost relates to the amount paid to the Chair during the current financial year.

Secretariat salaries

The Inquiry Secretariat team is led by the Secretary to the Inquiry, Kate Anderson. The team are responsible for supporting the Chair to deliver hearings and the report and running the operational delivery functions.

Inquiry legal team

The Inquiry legal team was led by Caroline Featherstone, Solicitor to the Inquiry (until 31 March 2026), and comprises of a team from the Government Legal Department. DWF have been contracted to provide legal services, including paralegals.

Counsel costs

The Chair is supported by a team of counsel. During this financial year, the Inquiry appointed 4 counsels, which comprises 1 King's counsel and 3 Junior counsel. Not all of these have worked full-time. The counsel team is:

- Nicholas Moss KC
- Richard Boyle
- John Goss
- Harriet Wakeman

Additional IT costs

IT costs beyond basic IT setup (i.e. not laptops, MS office/Google suite)

S.40 award costs (legal fees)

The Inquiry may, at the Chair's discretion, fund legal representation at the public expense in line with Section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005. Applicants for costs are controlled under the framework set out in the Inquiries Act 2005 and the Inquiry Rules 2006. The Secretary of State for the Home Department has issued a determination which sets out the rates that may be paid under Section 40 of the Act. The Southport Inquiry has published a [Costs Protocol](#), which is relevant to applications for the consideration of awards under Section 40.

Psychological support and safeguarding

The Inquiry is working with Hestia and The Coroners' Courts Support Service (CCSS) to provide emotional support services to victims and witnesses engaging with the Inquiry. The Inquiry also retains a designated safeguarding lead and a psychologist as consultants and to provide training to staff.

Document Management

This relates to the costs of the evidence management system, including associated software

Expert witnesses & research

The Inquiry has instructed experts to provide evidence to the Inquiry across various disciplines. As of 31 March 2026, the Inquiry has instructed two expert witnesses to prepare reports for the Chair.

Venue hire

These costs relate to the hire of Liverpool Town Hall as the venue for Inquiry hearings.

Office/ other rent costs

These costs relate to rent, utilities, maintenance and associated service charges required to support the operation of the Inquiry's London offices.

Other accommodation costs

These costs relate to the provision of security at the hearing venue.

Audio-visual & associated costs

These costs relate to RTS's provision of audio-visual and technical services for hearings.

Stakeholder engagement, communications & associated projects

Crest Advisory has been commissioned to provide communication support to the Inquiry. This includes responding to press queries, supervision of journalists attending hearings and other media support services to the Inquiry.

Website costs

Website costs relate to the hosting, design and ongoing maintenance of the Inquiry's website.

Expenses

These costs relate to accommodation, travel and subsistence for the Chair, Secretariat, legal team and counsel in connection with hearings held in Liverpool.

Report

These costs relate to the design and layout of the report.

Other

These costs consist of miscellaneous expenditure, including office supplies and postage fees.