

LONDON ASSEMBLY



Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

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Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

(Sent by email)

25 January 2021

Dear Sadiq

Vaccinations for frontline police officers

I am writing to you on behalf of the Police and Crime Committee to highlight our cross-party view that there must be an urgency to get frontline police officers vaccinated. The Commissioner of the Met has called for frontline police officers to be prioritised under the Government's vaccination programme. Our Committee joins the Commissioner in her calls.

The Met is working hard on behalf of Londoners to enforce COVID-19 regulations to help keep Londoners and our city safe. This means that in order to do their jobs, frontline officers are coming into close contact with those who breach COVID-19 regulations. As we have seen from the recent events in Hackney and Knightsbridge, police officers must intervene and break up illegal gatherings, which sometimes means entering properties and putting frontline officers at high risk.

The Met's frontline officers are working tirelessly to keep Londoners safe and they deserve to be protected from COVID-19 while they are doing their duty to protect us. The Commissioner has said that she is "baffled" as to why frontline police officers are not being prioritised and has been

pressing for action but to no avail.¹ The Police Federation for England and Wales has also added its voice to the call for frontline police officers to be prioritised and their vital frontline role recognised in the vaccination programme.²

The Committee was deeply saddened to hear of the death of PC Mark Warren, a Met officer who passed away as a result of catching COVID-19. Despite shielding because of his underlying health issues, the Met family lost one of its own.³ As we know with COVID-19, the virus does not care who you are, it is a vicious virus that has attacked millions across the world. The Met has been fortunate to date to not lose other serving police officers to COVID-19, but this remains a high risk. We must do everything we can to protect our officers as they increase their efforts to ensure that Londoners comply with the current health regulations.

The Deputy Commissioner recently told the Committee, that if frontline officers are prioritised, and the Met supplied with the vaccine, it could administer it without placing any burden on the NHS programme. Our Committee urges you to work with the Met to plan for the delivery of vaccinations to frontline officers in anticipation of vaccines being made available to them. This will enable a swift response as soon as the Government advises this can proceed.

Our Committee acknowledges the support for prioritising frontline police officers you showed in your response to our Deputy Chair, Steve O'Connell, in Mayor's Question Time on 21 January. We urge you to continue to press the Government to add frontline police officers to the prioritisation list as soon as the most vulnerable have been vaccinated. We have written to the Minister to add our voices to the call for action and I attach a copy of the letter for your information.

We look forward to a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

¹ LBC, [Met Police Commissioner 'baffled' why officers not at front of Covid vaccine queue](#), 19 January 2020

² BBC, [Covid-19: Met Police officers 'should be vaccinated with healthcare workers'](#), 5 January 2021

³ Metropolitan Police News, [Serving Met officer dies after testing positive for Covid-19](#), 22 January 2021