

LONDON ASSEMBLY



Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

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Nadhim Zahawi
Minister for Vaccine Deployment

(Sent by email)

25 January 2021

Dear Nadhim

Vaccinations for frontline police officers

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee to highlight our cross-party view that there must be an urgency within Government to get frontline police officers vaccinated. The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (the Met), Cressida Dick, has also 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 recent events in Hackney and Knightsbridge, police officers must intervene and break up illegal gatherings which sometimes means entering properties which inevitably puts officers at high risk.

The importance and bravery of the police has never been doubted in this country. Brave women and men work tirelessly to keep us all safe and the least we can do is ensure they are protected from COVID-19 while they undertake their essential duties protecting 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 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 Police and Crime Committee heard from Sir Stephen House, the Deputy Commissioner of the Met, that if frontline officers are prioritised, and supplied with the vaccine, it could administer it without placing any burden on the NHS programme.

Our Committee urges you to consider adding frontline police officers to the prioritisation list as soon as the most vulnerable have been vaccinated. We look forward to your response on this important issue.

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