

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham St,
London SW1P 4DF

Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC
Secretary of State for Justice
102 Petty France
London SW1H 9AJ

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham St
London SW1P 4DF

Via e-mail only

8th April 2020

Dear Secretaries of State,

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Covid-19

We are writing to you jointly to request that you take urgent action to protect people at risk of domestic abuse (DA), in particular, and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) more broadly, in the current Covid-19 crisis. We urge you to put funding in place to support services and accommodation and to urgently establish a cross-departmental ministerial working group to deliver national leadership and action across Government.

This is essential both to ensure join up in the Government response given the cross-cutting nature of DA and VAWG and to ensure that not only is action taken to deal with the sadly inevitable rise in DA and VAWG we will see, but that this is backed up with the necessary funding to tackle this rise and support victims.

We understand that on 19 March, the Government announced £1.6 billion of additional funding for local government to help them respond to Covid-19 pressures across all the services they deliver and that the position was that any additional funding for domestic abuse services should be met from this additional funding. The reality is that with local authorities facing so many competing demands this funding could be spent many times over and, in any case, will be largely spent on adult social care and will not be available to fund DA services. So,

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The APCC provides support to all Police and Crime Commissioners and policing governance bodies in England and Wales

further funding is required from Government specifically to tackle DA and other forms of VAWG.

This is a matter of urgency and it is important that we take action now. We must not wait for the inevitable rise to be seen in official data, as this delay would mean a lost opportunity to take action and protect people. We know from the evidence of other countries experiencing lockdown that one of the impacts of confining people to their homes is an increase in DA and VAWG and we should prepare for this now. The Government, rightly, did not wait until we ran out of ITU beds before building the Nightingale hospitals and neither must we delay in our response to the impact of Covid 19 measures on DA and VAWG until recording increases. It goes without saying that we stand ready to assist in any way we can to take this forward.

We look forward to your urgent response.

Yours sincerely,

Personal Data

Sophie Linden

Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
Joint APCC Victims Portfolio Lead

Personal Data

Julia Mulligan
PFCC for North Yorkshire
Joint APCC Victims Portfolio Lead

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Dame Vera Baird QC
Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

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Nicole Jacobs
Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales

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Claire Waxman
Victims Commissioner for London

cc. Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster