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Title: Letters on COVID-19 Vaccinations for Police Officers

Executive Summary

At the Police and Crime Committee meeting on 14 January 2021, the Committee resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, to agree any outputs arising from the meeting.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chairman, party Group Lead members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, the Chair of the Committee, Unmesh Desai AM, agreed the following letters on COVID-19 vaccinations for frontline police officers:

- Letter to the Mayor of London, as attached at **Appendix 1**;
- Letter to the Minister for Vaccine Deployment, as attached at **Appendix 2**; and
- Letters to London MPs on Early Day Motion, as attached at **Appendix 3**.

The letters will be formally noted at the Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Decision

That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chairman, party Group Lead Members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, agrees the following letters on COVID-19 vaccinations for frontline police officers:

- Letter to the Mayor of London, as attached at **Appendix 1**;
- Letter to the Minister for Vaccine Deployment, as attached at **Appendix 2**; and
- Letters to London MPs on Early Day Motion, as attached at **Appendix 3**.

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature

Date 27/01/2021



Printed Name Unmesh Desai AM (Chair, Police and Crime Committee)

Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Notes:

- 1. The Lead Officer should prepare this form for signature by relevant Members of the Assembly to record any instance where the Member proposes to take action under a specific delegated authority. The purpose of the form is to record the advice received from officers, and the decision made.
- 2. **The 'background' section (below) should be used to include an indication as to whether the information contained in / referred to in this Form should be considered as exempt under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). If so, the specimen Annexe (attached below) should be used. If this form does deal with exempt information, you must submit both parts of this form for approval together.**

Background and proposed next steps:

At the Police and Crime Committee meeting on 14 January 2021, the Committee resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, to agree any outputs arising from the meeting.

Following consultation with the Deputy Chairman, party Group Lead members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, the Chair of the Committee, Unmesh Desai AM, agreed the following letters on COVID-19 vaccinations for frontline police officers:

- Letter to the Mayor of London, as attached at **Appendix 1**;
- Letter to the Minister for Vaccine Deployment, as attached at **Appendix 2**; and
- Letters to London MPs on Early Day Motion, as attached at **Appendix 3**.

The letters will be formally noted at the Committee’s next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision

Signed by Committee Services	L J Harvey	Date	25/01/2021
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Print Name: Lauren Harvey	Tel:	x4383
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Financial implications NOT REQUIRED

NOTE: Finance comments and signature are required only where there are financial implications arising or the potential for financial implications.

Signed by Finance	Date
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Print Name	Tel:
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Legal implications

The Police and Crime Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signed by Legal



Date

25/01/2021

Print Name

Emma Strain, Monitoring Officer

Tel:

X 4399

Supporting detail/List of Consultees:

Steve O'Connell AM, Sian Berry AM, Peter Whittle AM, and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

Public Access to Information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 – Deferral**Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? No**

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form - No**Lead Officer/Author**

Signed

J Roker

Date

25/01/2021

Print Name

Janette Roker

Tel: x6562

Job Title

Senior Policy Adviser

Countersigned by
Executive Director

E. Williams

Date 26.01.2021

Print Name

Ed Williams

Tel: X4399

LONDON ASSEMBLY



Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

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www.london.gov.uk

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

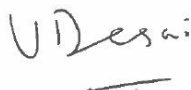
The Committee was deeply saddened to hear of the death of PC Mark Warren, a Met officer who passed away as a result of catching COVID-19. Despite shielding because of his underlying health issues, the Met family lost one of its own.³ As we know with COVID-19, the virus does not care who you are, it is 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

LONDON ASSEMBLY



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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

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Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee

Name of recipient

Title of recipient

(Sent by email)

28 January 2021

Dear [X]

Covid-19 vaccine prioritisation for police staff – support EDM 1414

As Chair of London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee, I am writing to ask you to sign and support EDM 1414 kindly sponsored by Florence Eshalomi MP. This calls for frontline police officers to be prioritised under the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in addition to healthcare workers, frontline key workers and as soon as the most vulnerable have been vaccinated:

"That this House pays tribute to the role key workers have played throughout the covid-19 pandemic; notes that in addition to health and social workers and other key workers, frontline police officers have an increased risk of exposure to covid-19, with the Metropolitan Police recently telling the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee that there are approximately 1,700 Metropolitan Police officers and staff who are not at work due to covid-19; believes that it is right that vulnerable citizens and health and social care workers are to be prioritised for the rollout of the covid-19 vaccine; supports the call of the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee, the Metropolitan Police and the Police Federation for England and Wales, that frontline police staff should be prioritised for the vaccine rollout in addition to health workers and other key frontline workers and as soon as the most vulnerable people have been vaccinated; and calls on the Government to amend its advice on priority groups for the covid-19 vaccination."

The Metropolitan Police has a critical role in enforcing COVID-19 regulations to help keep Londoners and our city safe. In carrying out their responsibilities, frontline officers come 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 often means entering crowded properties where social distancing is impossible. This inevitably puts officers at a high risk. Police officers work tirelessly to keep Londoners safe and the very least we can do is to protect them from COVID-19 while they undertake their essential duties protecting us.

Sir Stephen House QPM, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police recently told the Police and Crime Committee that there are roughly 1,700 Metropolitan Police staff who are not in the workplace due to COVID-19. This figure includes a mixture of people who are sick with the virus and those who are self-isolating due to track and trace. While some of these employees can do part of their work from home, others cannot.

With the police service already stretched in London and with officers having to enforce COVID-19 regulations, the Government must look at adding front line officers to the next phase of the vaccination programme.

I do hope you can support this important motion.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Unmesh Desai". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

Unmesh Desai AM
Chair of the Police and Crime Committee