

## **Open Letter to Government on behalf of the Police Federations of England and Wales**

Police officers feel betrayed by the lack of action from the Governments of England and Wales to protect them from exposure to this deadly virus.

At the daily press briefing on Monday the Health Secretary made clear that officers will not be included in the first phase of the Covid vaccine roll out. He could not even offer a guarantee beyond that, only that frontline officers will be 'considered' for vaccination in the next phase. This is not only unacceptable to our members it is also a dereliction of both Governments' duty.

It shows that warm words and platitudes mean very little from Government.

Guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation states that:

*Frontline health and social care workers at high risk of acquiring infection, at high individual risk of developing serious disease, or at risk of transmitting infection to multiple vulnerable persons or other staff in a healthcare environment, are considered of higher priority for vaccination than those at lower risk.*

The risks presented to our members show that this guidance applies to them. The nature of policing means our members are not always able to mitigate the risk of contracting and spreading this deadly virus. They often have to get up close and personal in many situations, which means the risk is ever present.

One in three officers have reported being threatened by somebody claiming to have Covid. The level of incidents of people weaponising the virus – by coughing or spitting at them – has increased considerably during the pandemic. On behalf of Government, police officers are putting their lives on the line every day and run a very real risk of becoming infected and exposing colleagues, family members as well as the public.

This seriously threatens the resilience of the police service if officers are off sick or required to isolate, taking them away from their duties.

This is not about police officers jumping the queue and never has been. It is about the duty of care that Government has to protect those who protect society. Thanks to the success and speed of the vaccination programme we know it would take less than a day to vaccinate the entire police service in England and Wales if the political will is there to do it.

Police officers have done everything asked of them, now it is time for Government to step up and protect those who have been on the frontline throughout this pandemic. Anything less would be a deep betrayal and will not be forgiven or forgotten.

**John Apter**, National Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales

**Andy Roebuck**, Chair of Avon & Somerset Police Federation

**Steve Bozward**, Chair of Bedfordshire Police Federation

**Liz Groom**, Chair of Cambridgeshire Police Federation

**James Thompson**, Chair of Cheshire Police Federation

**Mike Reed**, Chair of City of London Police Federation

**Glen Teeley**, Chair of Cleveland Police Federation

**Paul Williams**, Chair of Cumbria Police Federation

**Tony Wetton**, Chair of Derbyshire Police Federation  
**Andy Berry**, Chair of Devon and Cornwall Police Federation  
**Anna Harvey**, Chair of Dorset Police Federation  
**Andy Jackson**, Chair of Durham Police Federation  
**Gareth Jones**, Chair of Dyfed-Powys Police Federation  
**Laura Heggie**, Chair of Essex Police Federation  
**Steve James**, Chair of Gloucestershire Police Federation  
**Stu Berry**, Chair of Greater Manchester Police Federation  
**Steve Thorpe**, Chair of Gwent Police Federation  
**Zoe Wakefield**, Chair of Hampshire Police Federation  
**Geoff Bardell**, Chair of Hertfordshire Police Federation  
**Pete Musgrave**, Chair of Humberside Police Federation  
**Neil Mennie**, Chair of Kent Police Federation  
**Rachel Hanley**, Chair of Lancashire Police Federation  
**Adam Commons**, Chair of Leicestershire Police Federation  
**Phil Clark**, Chair of Lincolnshire Police Federation  
**Tony Fairclough**, Chair of Merseyside Police Federation  
**Ken Marsh**, Chair of the Metropolitan Police Federation  
**Andy Symonds**, Chair of Norfolk Police Federation  
**Nick Hawe**, Chair of North Wales Police Federation  
**Rob Bowles**, Chair of North Yorkshire Police Federation  
**Sam Dobbs**, Chair of Northamptonshire Police Federation  
**Jim Gray**, Chair of Northumbria Police Federation  
**Mark Petrovic**, Chair of Nottinghamshire Police Federation  
**Steve Treharne**, Chair of South Wales Police Federation  
**Steve Kent**, Chair of South Yorkshire Police Federation  
**Phil Jones**, Chair of Staffordshire Police Federation  
**Darren Harris**, Chair of Suffolk Police Federation  
**Melanie Warnes**, Chair of Surrey Police Federation  
**Daren Egan**, Chair of Sussex Police Federation  
**Craig O'Leary**, Chair of Thames Valley Police Federation  
**Simon Payne**, Chair of Warwickshire Police Federation  
**Sarah Cooper**, Chair of West Mercia Police Federation  
**Jon Nott**, Chair of West Midlands Police Federation  
**Brian Booth**, Chair of West Yorkshire Police Federation  
**Mark Andrews**, Chair of Wiltshire Police Federation