

Rt. Hon Robert Halfon MP  
Chair, Education Select Committee  
House of Commons  
London, SW1A 0AA

4<sup>th</sup> June 2020,

Dear Robert,

Thank you for inviting me to participate in yesterday's evidence session. I enjoyed what I felt was a very productive discussion, with a lot of consensus and shared insights between the panel and Committee Members. I am very encouraged to see the Committee being so proactive on this issue.

I am writing to pick up on the last question you posed to me, regarding the need to provide a comprehensive list of vulnerable children in England. I am pleased to let you know that my office has already been working on this, and will be publishing it shortly as a resource for Government, nationally and locally, and for Parliamentarians.

I started my programme of work on [childhood vulnerability](#) four years ago in response to my frustration that no one in Government could answer the question of which children are vulnerable or how many children are vulnerable – because each Department categorises vulnerability differently. Lots of children are vulnerable, but to different degrees and in different ways. Our [framework](#) for defining vulnerability identifies 70 different vulnerability characteristics, either relating to the child themselves (for example SEND) or to their family circumstances (for example living in a home with a parent addicted to substances). A lot of the work I have undertaken has been about looking at the overlaps between these different risk factors in children's lives which has enable me to define a group of about 2.3m children in England living with really significant risk factors.

The Coronavirus crisis has increased the urgency with which we must meet the needs of vulnerable children, but has also influenced who counts as vulnerable. Some groups may be newly vulnerable as a result, particularly children living in overcrowded housing, temporary accommodation or technological poverty. Our new framework now considers these aspects as well.

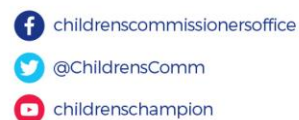
The latest iteration of my work is more complete and more refined than ever before. Moreover, for the first time I am able to provide nearly all of our data at a [local area level](#). This was brought forward and shared with local and national Government in response to the Covid-19 crisis.

We have been developing a new interactive dashboard for users to explore and visualise this data, reflecting my desire to make this information engaging and accessible for anyone working with children in local or national Government, and Parliamentarians and

Children's Commissioner for England: [Anne Longfield OBE](#)

Post: Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT  
Tel: 020 7783 8330 Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)  
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Councillors. The new interface allows users to search the data, analyse the level of child vulnerability for any local area, compare different local areas on over 100 different metrics, and visualise the data in different ways.

This new dashboard is the richest and most comprehensive source of data on the characteristics of children in England. I will be launching it publicly this summer, with bespoke briefings for a range of public sector stakeholders, and for Parliamentarians. However, in advance of this I would welcome the opportunity to give you, your fellow Committee members and the Committee staff a private demonstration of the current version, explaining what data is available, what it shows, and how it can be used locally and nationally.

Please let me know if this would be of interest, and my office can set something up very quickly with your office and the clerks. It will take about 15 mins to show you the dashboard and I am or my team are very happy to do individual briefings for members of the Committee to ease the pressure of finding one time to suit all.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Longfield".

Anne Longfield  
Children's Commissioner for England

A simple, horizontal handwritten flourish or underline stroke.

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