



Ministry
of Justice

Alex Davies-Jones MP
Parliamentary Under-
Secretary of State

Gweinyddiaeth
Cyfiawnder

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair, Justice Committee

MoJ ref: SUB132524

10 March 2026

Dear Andy,

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE UPDATE: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG) STRATEGY

Thank you for your letter of 24th February regarding the publication of 'Freedom from Violence and Abuse: a cross-government strategy' in December 2025, and your interest in the breadth of its ambitions. As you say, the strategy marks a real milestone in our ambition to halve the prevalence of violence against women and girls in this country – something both Minister Phillips and I are absolutely committed to doing. I welcome your, and the Committee's, continued interest in this area.

Your letter requested a list outlining which of the strategy's commitments fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice, including those delivered by MoJ-related bodies. You also asked for a progress update for each of those commitments, and implementation timelines.

The Ministry of Justice is responsible for 41 strategy commitments in total. I have set these – as well as those owned by the Crown Prosecution Service (an independent body superintended by the Attorney-General's Office) and Judicial Office – out at **Annex A**. Work is underway to progress each commitment. I am sure you will understand that it is too early in the delivery cycle to share detailed updates against each commitment. As you note, the VAWG Ministerial Group plans to publish annual progress reports, and my Department will provide full progress updates through this process. The VAWG Ministerial Board will also continue to meet bimonthly to oversee implementation, track progress, and identify and unblock risks to delivery. As co-chair, it is of course my priority to use the Board to assure delivery.

Alongside delivery monitoring, the Board will track progress against our overall ambition – to halve the prevalence of VAWG – using a combined prevalence estimate of the proportion of people aged 16 and over who experienced any of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking in the previous 12 months, as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales. We will also track supporting headline metrics for female homicide, repeat domestic abuse, and the prevalence of sexual harassment, as well as a further set of sub-metrics to monitor progress across Government.

I thank the Committee again for your interest in the developments in this vitally important area of work, and I would be happy to discuss the Ministry of Justice's progress at a later date.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Davies-Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

ALEX DAVIES-JONES MP
Minister for Victims and Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

PREVENTION		
	Policy	Lead Department
Improving public awareness of VAWG and creating lasting change		
1	Launch a national conversation and summit to build a positive, aspirational agenda for men and boys – not at the expense of women and girls, but in support of them.	MoJ
To ensure online spaces are safe, especially for children and young people		
2	Criminalise strangulation pornography. We are legislating to make it a criminal offence to possess or publish pornography which depicts strangulation or suffocation.	MoJ
3	Designate the depiction of strangulation in pornography as a priority offence under the Online Safety Act, meaning platforms will be held accountable and ensuring content does not spread, which can lead to normalising harmful practices in people’s private lives. Platforms will be required to take proactive steps to prevent users from seeing illegal strangulation and suffocation content. This could include companies using automated systems to pre-emptively detect and hide the images, moderation tools or stricter content policies to prevent abusive content from circulating.	MoJ, DSIT
4	Ban nudification apps and other tools designed to create synthetic non-consensual intimate images (NCII), to stop women and girls’ images being tampered with and exploited without their consent. This will target the firms and individuals providing and supplying such tools.	HO, DSIT, MoJ
5	Deliver the Government’s manifesto commitment to ban non-consensual sexually explicit deepfakes by creating a new criminal offence through the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Deepfake pictures and videos can look and sound convincing, and in some cases can copy someone’s face, voice, and mannerisms, but are made using AI. This offence criminalises the creation of non-consensual deepfake intimate images without consent or reasonable belief in consent, as well as asking someone to create a non-consensual intimate image deepfake.	DSIT, HO and MoJ
6	Make the ‘cyberflashing’ offence a ‘priority offence’ under the Online Safety Act 2023. Cyberflashing involves someone sharing photos or films of a person’s genitals for the purposes of their own sexual gratification or to cause the victim humiliation, alarm or distress.	MoJ

7	Launch a call for evidence to better understand online misogynistic image-based abuse and the extent to which there are new harms and behaviour which may not be fully captured by existing criminal offences.	MoJ
To improve support for young people outside of school		
8	Continue to work with Youth Offending Teams to ensure staff have the skills, training, and resources they need to respond effectively to young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours or attitudes , recognising the critical importance of addressing these behaviours among children and young people.	MoJ
RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF PERPATRATORS		
Policy		Lead department
A coordinated approach		
9	Issue multi-agency statutory guidance on stalking , including on engaging with Independent Stalking Advocates. Issue statutory guidance for the police on releasing information to victims and survivors about their online stalker under the “Right to Know” scheme.	HO and MoJ
Operating with leading technology		
10	Expand the use of electronic monitoring for VAWG cases, this will include the use of alcohol tags in VAWG cases to reduce the freedoms of perpetrators , and we will explore further innovative technological solutions to monitor risk and prevent harm, such as proximity monitoring of perpetrators.	HO and MoJ
11	Roll out Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) to all police forces and courts across England and Wales to ensure frontline agencies have access to the most effective tools to disrupt and restrict perpetrators in and out of the criminal justice system. The DAPO is a game-changing new protective order that can impose a combination of tougher prohibitions and requirements on perpetrators in the community and going through the criminal justice system. Flexible in scope and duration, this order sends a clear signal that abusive behaviour won't be tolerated. By rolling out to across England and Wales, we are ensuring that domestic abuse victims and survivors are offered greater protections from their abusers.	HO and MoJ

12	Improve police and criminal justice system's use of VAWG protection orders through a series of reforms, including improving data collection and publication, enhancing police systems for recording and managing orders, strengthening guidance and application processes, and exploring measures to bolster enforcement and monitoring. These changes will help streamline processes, improve operational efficiency, increase transparency, and ensure victims and survivors are better protected from all forms of VAWG.	HO and MoJ
13	Change the law to allow Stalking Protection Orders to be placed on perpetrators on conviction or acquittal, ensuring that victims have stronger safeguards.	HO and MoJ
14	Improve the function of Stalking Protector Orders (SPOs) to ensure that they are used effectively and at the earliest opportunity. We are legislating in the Crime and Policing Bill to allow the courts to make SPOs on conviction or acquittal of their own volition. We will also improve the function and use of interim SPOs to ensure they operate effectively and provide timely safeguards and assess whether the processes around applying for an SPO can be improved so it is as seamless as possible.	HO and MoJ
15	Take robust action to tackle spiking. We have delivered the Government's manifesto commitment to create a new criminal offence of administering a harmful substance (including by spiking) in the Crime and Policing Bill to help police better respond to this crime. The legislation is one part of a wider package of measures being progressed by the Government on spiking. In addition to the legislative change, the Government is taking forward a wide range of work to combat spiking. This includes: i. Deliver training for Security Industry Authority-licenced door supervisors, aiming to train all 346,000+ licence holders by April 2028. ii. Fund research on the effectiveness of rapid urine-testing kits for spiking detection. iii. Support police spiking intensification weeks to raise awareness, improve reporting, and increase testing nationwide. iv. Fund academic research into perpetrators' motivations behind spiking offences. v. Work with the police to develop spiking guidance for forces and pilot new approaches to gathering timely samples from victims. vi. Continue to train staff in the hospitality sector to understand and better respond to spiking incidents.	HO and MoJ
Managing perpetrators in all settings		
16	Consult on the introduction of punitive measures for VAWG perpetrators, including making VAWG convictions grounds for professional bans. We will establish tough new measures to ensure that perpetrators are no longer able to act with impunity and that individuals in positions of trust and influence will be held to the highest standards. Many professional regulators and bodies already have rules about "maintaining trust" and "bringing the profession into disrepute." We will make it clear: if you abuse, you lose the right to positions of power, privilege, and influence. We will introduce tough new measures to ensure that they face real consequences and work with every sector, from healthcare to sporting, works to stop perpetrators from holding positions of responsibility, privilege, and influence.	HO and MoJ

Strengthen the response to VAWG perpetrators across the entire criminal justice system to stop reoffending		
17	Continue to work towards an automated system to ensure policing and other law enforcement agencies are notified of VAWG protection orders issued in the courts to give victims and survivors faster, more consistent protection. Unacceptably, there is currently no automatic information-sharing between family courts and criminal justice agencies, leading to police and other agencies often not being able to build an accurate profile of, or case against, a perpetrator, as they do not have all the information. This is a shocking gap in the system. This summer, we have begun to close this loophole by establishing a new process for the automatic sharing of Non-Molestation Orders (NMOs) – the most commonly issued VAWG-related order in the family courts – between family courts and the police to ensure that police are consistently informed of NMOs when made. This enables the police to take early steps to safeguard the victim proactively, run background checks, and monitor the perpetrator. We are exploring going even further to ensure that there is an automatic system in place for all court jurisdictions and VAWG protection orders.	HO and MoJ
18	Work with the CPS and police to jointly improve access to justice for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including reviewing the time limits for charging domestic abuse-related summary offences, and considering whether greater flexibility could help reduce the number of timed-out cases. We will establish whether the benefits of a more consistent approach across domestic abuse-related offences could support victims and survivors who face delays in reporting their abuse due to trauma, fear or coercive control. These actions will form part of our wider commitment to create a justice system that is fair, responsive and better equipped to meet the needs of domestic abuse victims and survivors.	HO, MoJ, CPS
19	Bring Operation Soteria to courts. Operation Soteria fundamentally changed the way that the police and CPS investigate and prosecute rape cases, ensuring that investigations do not place the responsibility on the victim, and that police and CPS work in partnership. We will now test the extent to which the principles of Operation Soteria are followed at court and establish areas for improvement which can then be considered on a national level.	MoJ
20	Introduce a new domestic abuse marker at court through the Sentencing Bill, meaning that for the first time we will be able to identify all domestic abuse offenders. This will mean that where a judge believes an offence involved domestic abuse, they must clearly say so at sentencing and the court must record this. For the first time, this will identify all domestic abuse offenders in the criminal justice system, even when the offence is not obviously domestic abuse related. It will support HM Prisons and Probation Service to put in place appropriate interventions in prison and the community, better inform offender management, and support improved data collection and evaluation of the how these offenders are managed in the criminal justice system.	MoJ

21	Make trauma-informed training available for all criminal court staff by spring 2026 to improve how criminal courts support victims and survivors , helping to reduce attrition and ensure criminal courts are responsive and better equipped to meet the needs of victims and survivors.	MoJ
22	Significantly invest in the capacity and capability of the Probation Service and community services. This investment will enable more electronic monitoring, additional staffing, and expanded accommodation, ensuring offenders are closely tracked, supported, and managed effectively.	MoJ
23	Replace the violent and sex offender database (ViSOR) with a new Multi-Agency Public Protection System (MAPPS) by June 2028. MAPPS will enable the police and HM Prisons and Probation Service to more effectively manage serious offenders who pose a risk of harm to the public through upgraded technological capabilities and improved data sharing. Once delivered, we will continue to develop MAPPS to provide additional capabilities beyond the current system (ViSOR) such as automated information sharing, and ensuring police, prisons and probation staff have the right tools to manage the most dangerous offenders of these crimes.	HO and MoJ
24	Strengthen guidance on using multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) to tackle domestic abuse and will improve how the Probation Service uses data to ensure MAPPA are used effectively to better manage the most dangerous domestic abuse offenders. Alongside modernising our systems, we are strengthening the frameworks that guide how agencies work together to manage high-risk offenders. This includes enhancing data systems to capture offence-specific details, risk levels, and MAPPA status. We are exploring how modern digital technology can take unstructured data in offender records, such as indicators of domestic abuse or child safeguarding concerns, and present the data in accessible format to probation practitioners, to inform risk assessments.	MoJ
25	Jointly review, across the Home Office and Ministry of Justice, HM Prison and Probation Service risk assessment processes to ensure they are robust and responsive to the specific risks posed by VAWG perpetrators.	HO & MoJ
SUPPORT		
	Policy	Lead department
End the postcode lottery of support for victims and survivors of VAWG crimes		

26	Reform how victims' services are commissioned to ensure that support is consistent, delivers what victims and survivors need, and is fit for purpose. This will include drawing on existing duties in Wales within the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015; and considering implementation of the Duty to Collaborate in the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, which applies to England. The aim is to improve local commissioning of support services for adult and child victims of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and serious violence, with specific attention to the diversity of victim cohorts. We want to improve how funding is used and ensure that it is based on what victims and survivors need. We will consider the implications from the reforms to policing to ensure these goals are achieved.	HO, MoJ and across government
27	Support victims and survivors with the largest-ever investment of £550 million in victim support services over the next three years. This includes annual increases.	MoJ & DHSC
28	Expand Home Office investment in a range of helpline services that provide support and advice to victims and survivors, their families, and professionals, as well as individuals concerned about their own behaviour. This will include tailored helplines for specific communities who require more specific support, ensuring that support is accessible, inclusive, and responsive. This investment will strengthen the national response to VAWG by ensuring that someone is there to support when victims and survivors most need advice.	HO & MoJ
29	Continue to embed the principles of the Victims Funding Strategy nationally.	MoJ
Improving victim and survivors' experience of the Criminal Justice System		
30	Reduce myths and misconceptions at court. Following the Law Commission's report on the use of evidence in sexual offence prosecutions, we will introduce legislation to improve the victim experience at court, focusing on the admissibility of evidence and clarifying the support that victims and survivors can access in the courtroom.	MoJ
31	Continue raising awareness of the Victims' Code, which sets out the rights of all victims of crime, including the right to be provided with information, and to be referred to support services.	MoJ
32	Introduce free independent legal advisers for victims and survivors of adult rape. This support will help to ensure that victims and survivors feel confident in asserting their rights from the moment they report a crime.	MoJ
33	Make trauma-informed training available for all criminal court staff by spring 2026 to improve how criminal courts support victims and survivors, helping to reduce attrition and ensure criminal courts are responsive and better equipped to meet the needs of victims and survivors.	MoJ

34	<p>Strengthen post-conviction communication and support. We are establishing a new, dedicated Victim Helpline and updating the Victim Contact Scheme through the Victims and Courts Bill. Victims of domestic abuse and specified VAWG-related breach offences will be able to request information about their offender's release through the Victim Helpline, and receive this information where appropriate, ensuring they are not left in the dark at critical moments.</p>	MoJ
35	<p>Improve training for criminal justice practitioners on VAWG to inform appropriate sentencing and offender management. We will also work with the Criminal Bar to ensure that the needs of victims and survivors are understood and their experience at court is improved.</p>	MoJ
36	<p>Accelerate the progression of cases to improve timeliness in the criminal courts. The time it takes for rape and other sexual offences cases to move through the criminal courts is unacceptable and can impact on victim attrition from the court process. We are undertaking work to reform the criminal courts and ensure a sustainable system, implementing the recommendations from Sir Brian Leveson's once-in-a-generation reforms in his Review of the Criminal Courts.</p>	MoJ
37	<p>Continue to offer free transcripts of sentencing remarks to victims and survivors of rape and other sexual offences in cases that are heard in a crown court. Sentencing is an important part of the criminal justice process for victims and survivors, but we know that attending court to hear the judge's sentencing remarks can be distressing. The Ministry of Justice concluded, following a one-year pilot, that provision should be continued on an ongoing basis for these victims and survivors.</p>	MoJ
38	<p>Expand the use of Domestic Abuse Specialist Courts to improve support for victims and survivors, and strengthen rehabilitative management of perpetrators. Domestic abuse cases are undeniably complex and specialist courts can bring specialists and multiple agencies together to improve justice outcomes and victims' experience. This can have long-term positive impacts, helping victims and survivors to recover and rebuild their lives. We will expand the use of Domestic Abuse Specialist Courts, as recommended by the Independent Sentencing Review.</p>	MoJ
<p>Ensure that the Family Courts cannot be used as spaces to revictimise victims and survivors</p>		
39	<p>Expand the Private Law Pathfinder pilot to one additional Designated Family Judge area by January 2026, with a view to national roll-out to improve the experiences for children and families. The model applies in family court proceedings for child arrangements orders, specific issue orders, prohibited steps orders and</p>	MoJ

	proceedings for an enforcement following an alleged breach of a child arrangements order and is now operational in nine court areas across England and Wales. By January, it will mean a quarter of all relevant cases follow the model.	
40	Repeal the presumption of parental involvement in the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Families Act 2014 , reaffirming our commitment to ensuring that the welfare of the individual child remains the court's paramount consideration.	MoJ
41	We have legislated to automatically restrict the exercise of parental responsibility for those convicted of serious sexual offences. This means that child sex offenders will no longer be allowed to have duty of care or the right to make significant decisions about the lives of their children, and children will not be looked after by parents who have abused them. This will protect children, reduce the risk of reoffending and prevent revictimisation.	MoJ
42	Work with the Family Procedure Rule Committee on information sharing and disclosure over the next 12 months. The Family Procedure Rule Committee will assess whether current restrictions on sharing information from family cases are always justified and proportionate.	MoJ
43	Work with stakeholders across the family justice system to improve information sharing between organisations over the next 12 months.	MoJ
44	Consider the findings of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's report on the operation of the Family Court Reporting and Review Mechanism and provide a government response.	MoJ
45	Examine the misuse of civil courts to continue patterns of abuse and explore whether further safeguards, guidance, or procedural changes could strengthen the court's response to this form of abuse.	MoJ
46	Publish measures, during 2026-27 through the Family Justice Board (FJB), to track progress in meeting commitments to improve the family justice system response to domestic abuse. For too long, victims and survivors of VAWG have been traumatised and retraumatised via the family courts. We categorically cannot let this continue. We need reforms across the family justice system and the role of the FJB, co-chaired by the Department for Education and the Ministry of Justice, is central to overseeing these reforms. The FJB has agreed to introduce clear success measures to ensure it is meeting its commitments to improve the whole family justice system.	MoJ
47	Work with the judiciary to support the anonymisation and publication of more family court judgments. We want families and children to have confidence in the decisions the family court makes about their lives and for these	MoJ

	to be more transparent. Since January 2025, Transparency Orders have been made available in all courts in England and Wales, providing a clear framework for journalists and legal bloggers to know what they are able to report about what they see and hear at a hearing.	
48	Prevent the instruction of unregulated experts in family law children’s proceedings. The Government is aware that counter allegations of so-called ‘parental alienation’ can be used in cases where domestic abuse has been alleged. Although the Government is clear that “parental alienation syndrome” has no evidential basis and is a discredited concept, officials are also aware of concerns regarding unregulated experts providing expert evidence around claims of parental alienation. We are working to prevent the instruction of unregulated experts, including unregulated “parental alienation” experts.	MoJ
Improve support for women in CJS		
50	Explore the recommendation from the Independent Sentencing Review to consider a women’s specific pathway as part of drug and alcohol treatment requirements.	DHSC and MoJ
Right to live free from abuse		
51	Publish a consultation on our manifesto commitment to strengthen rights and protections for cohabiting couples by spring 2026. Limited financial rights for separating cohabitants can aid perpetrators of domestic abuse and make it harder for victims and survivors to leave a relationship because they are economically dependent on their partner. We will publish a consultation by spring 2026, which will include consideration of how victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including economic abuse, can best be protected by cohabitation reform.	MoJ
Address economic impact of DA		
52	Abolished the fee for the Persons at Risk of Violence (PARV) order in November 2025, so that victims and survivors experiencing insolvency can apply easily for an exemption to their details being published on the insolvency register. The publication of personal details (such as personal addresses) on the insolvency register is a statutory requirement. This can be particularly dangerous for victims and survivors of domestic abuse who are escaping their abuser. The only way to prevent these details being made public is by applying for the PARV order. We have abolished the fee for these orders, so that victims and survivors of domestic abuse never find themselves unable to pay for a PARV order.	MoJ

Learning from tragedy to save lives		
	By 2028, the Law Commission will review the law on homicide offences and the sentencing framework for murder, including how the law responds to abuse-related cases and defences. This review will inform future legislative changes to ensure the law better reflects the realities of abuse.	MoJ
53	Ensure that the 2025/26 training programme for coroners will include the sharing of experience and best practice in investigating deaths where domestic abuse is believed to be a factor. This has been confirmed by the Chief Coroner.	JO and MoJ