



Home Office

Home Secretary

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

Graeme Irvine  
Area Coroner  
Eastern Area of Greater London  
Walthamstow Coroners Court,  
Queens Road  
London  
E17 8QP

DECS Reference: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Irvine,

Thank you for your letter of 11 November 2020 enclosing a copy of the Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths, written following the Inquest touching upon the death of Ms. Chelsie Violet Greatorex.

In your letter you ask that I ensure the matters you have raised are considered by the Metropolitan Police Service. I should stress that the Metropolitan Police Service is operationally independent and, as such, will respond separately on the specifics of the investigation in question. I am therefore responding to the Coroner's concerns only in so far as they relate to national policy.

I was deeply saddened to learn about the death of Ms. Greatorex and I would first like to express my deepest condolences to her family for their unimaginable loss.

Rape and sexual assault are devastating crimes. The government expects every report to be treated seriously from the point of disclosure, every victim to be treated with dignity and every investigation and prosecution to be conducted thoroughly and professionally. We want victims to have the confidence to report these crimes, knowing they will get the support they need and that everything will be done to bring offenders to justice.

That is why, along with the Ministry of Justice and the Attorney General's Office, the Home Office is currently carrying out a review of the criminal justice response to rape. The scope of the review covers the length of the criminal justice process, from police report and investigation through to final outcome in court, so that we can take a comprehensive view of any issues that need to be addressed within the system and take action accordingly.

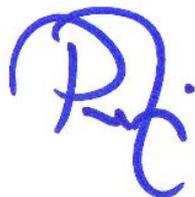
The review is considering several issues which related to the matters of concern you have reported. These include the provision of support for victims during the criminal justice process; the role of specialist officers with training in rape and sexual assault investigations; and causes of delay to investigations. The review will report in due course with a package of actions for cross-system improvement. I am determined that measures we take following the review will ensure more effective handling of cases and the timely delivery of justice and support for victims of these awful crimes.

Recognising that Ms. Greatorex was 17 years old when she was sexually assaulted, you may also wish to be aware that the government will shortly be publishing a first of its kind national strategy on tackling all forms of child sexual abuse. A key element of this strategy will be working across government to improve the way the criminal justice system responds to child sexual abuse and to ensure victims and survivors receive the support they deserve. We will continue to prioritise child sexual abuse as a national threat in the Strategic Policing Requirement, to empower police forces to maximise their specialist skills and expertise to tackle these crimes.

The Regulation 28 Report raises specific concerns about the level of communication and information that Ms. Greatorex received from the police during the investigation and the support that was offered to her. The government wants to ensure that the rights of victims are recognised at every stage of the criminal justice system. For this reason, we recently published a new, restructured Victims' Code which sets out 12 key overarching rights regarding the support that victims should receive from the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies. We will also be consulting on a new Victims' Law that will guarantee that victims receive their rights under the Code and agencies are held to account for delivering them.

Furthermore, the government is committed to ensuring access to high quality support for victims and survivors of rape and sexual assault, wherever they live in the country and regardless of when the abuse occurred. In 2020/21, the Ministry of Justice has awarded £12m to 91 rape support centres across England and Wales to provide independent, specialist support to victims of sexual violence, including victims of child sexual abuse, an increase of £4m from 2019/20. The government has also announced that an additional £4m per year until 2022 will be invested in recruiting more Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) who play a vital role in informing and supporting victims at every stage of the criminal justice process.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter. I hope that my response has demonstrated the government's commitment to improving the criminal justice system response to rape and sexual assault and to ensuring that victims and survivors receive the support that they need.



**Rt Hon Priti Patel MP**  
**Home Secretary**