



Senior Coroner Emma Whitting  
[REDACTED]

DECS Reference: MIN/1508026/26

4 June 2026

Dear Ms Whitting,

Thank you for your email of 13 May to the Home Office regarding the Prevention of Future Deaths report for Ms Suseel Rana. I am replying as the Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

Thank you for sharing a copy of this report into what was clearly a tragic case. May I first say I am so sorry to hear of the loss of Ms Rana. I can only imagine how difficult this must have been for her family and loved ones.

I am sorry to hear of Ms Rana's experience with the application she submitted to Bedfordshire Police under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS). As you know, the DVDS enables the police to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of domestic abuse about their partner's or ex-partner's previous abusive or violent offending. This is based on police common law powers to prevent crime.

Disclosures can be made through two routes; under the 'right to know' route the police can proactively disclose information to protect a potential victim(s) and under the 'right to ask' route, a member of the public can apply directly to the police for a disclosure. Regardless of the reason for the disclosure, the safeguarding of the victim should be the priority throughout the disclosure process.

At points 10(2) and 10(3) in your report you raise concerns around the way Bedfordshire Police officers handled Ms Rana's DVDS application. I am unfortunately unable to comment on or intervene in individual cases or police investigations. This is because the police are independent of Government. However, I see that you have also shared your report with the Chief Constable for Bedfordshire Police, who I hope will be able to address these points.

In your report at 10(4) you highlight "The lack of progression of the Deceased's Clare's Law application to the actual decision-making stage meant that the steps envisaged by the DVDS Guidance, which include a referral to a multi-agency forum, were not taken. Had such steps been taken, it is likely that the Deceased would have been more supported".

The DVDS statutory guidance indicates that it is best practice for police to refer cases to a multi-agency forum to inform disclosure decisions and advise on safeguarding measures, and that high risk applications should always be referred. However, such referrals are not mandatory and do not happen in every case. Nevertheless, the guidance recognises that in making a request, a person is often registering concerns about possible risks to their own safety. The guidance is also clear that safety planning should be undertaken for all

DVDS cases, be ongoing and, where appropriate, be developed in collaboration with an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor and other safeguarding agencies. As such, Ms Rana should have received appropriate safeguarding support regardless of whether her application was progressed to the decision-making stage.

At 10(5) you also point out that the guidance is unclear regarding what steps police are required to take, if any, where a decision is taken not to progress a DVDS case to the decision-making stage. This is an important point; thank you for bringing it to my attention.

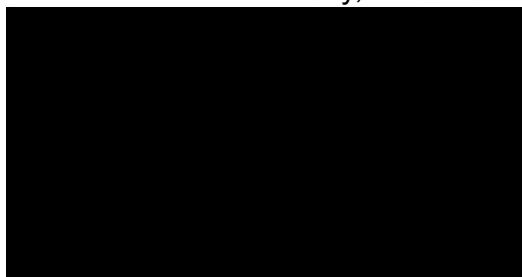
I am aware that there are issues and inconsistencies in the way that the DVDS is currently being implemented across forces in England and Wales, and that more needs to be done to make sure the current scheme is working well for victims. In the VAWG Strategy, the Home Office committed to working closely with the National Centre for VAWG and Public Protection and the Independent Office for Police Conduct to create a clearer, more consistent framework for police and other agencies to improve implementation of the DVDS.

The Home Office also committed to explore the potential to expand the DVDS to other forms of VAWG. I would like to assure you this work to improve disclosure schemes is underway, and I will ensure that the issues you have raised are considered as part of it.

The Home Office is also working to develop and roll out a digital tool to support the police to make better decisions when disclosing information. The scale of VAWG is a national emergency and a top priority for this Government, and we are working to deliver a cross-government transformative approach to halve VAWG in a decade, underpinned by the new VAWG Strategy. Protecting victims is also a top priority for me personally, and I hope this response assures you that I am committed to improving the DVDS and ensuring victims are properly safeguarded by police.

Thank you once again for sharing your report with the Home Office.

Yours sincerely,



**Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls**