

NO BREATH REQUIRED

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Ref: NBR/2026/005 – Coronial oversight of stillbirths and Section 4 of the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc.) Act 2019

MP Ref: [REDACTED]

MoJ Ref: [REDACTED]

Alex Davies-Jones MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

28th August 2026

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter dated 26th August 2026.

I would like to thank you for confirming that you are the Minister with responsibility for coroner policy, and for confirming that your department agrees with Baroness Amos' recommendation to respond to the consultation on coronial investigation of stillbirths. Given this, may I ask that you confirm that the Government considers that the duty in section 4 (3) of the 2019 Act has not yet been satisfied, that Government does not consider that the factual summary of responses to the 2019 consultation equates to the report required by section 4 (3), and that the 5 year timescale set out in section 4 (6) has not yet begun.

Whilst I am grateful for the confirmation of responsibility, it was disappointing to read that the matter of coronial jurisdiction is still being connected to health-based investigation processes for stillbirths. Health-based review and investigation routes are undoubtedly in need of overhaul, the principle of access to independent coronial investigation must sit separately to the processes of the body responsible for the care as afforded to those who die in any other circumstance. This principle exists for other deaths in NHS care, where PSIRF procedures sit separately to the coroner, and in other sectors such as police custody. The need for independence in the investigation of deaths is long established and must not be ignored for stillbirths.

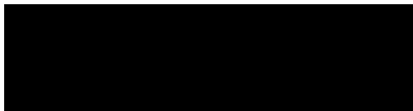
I would also highlight that my understanding of Baroness Amos' recommendations regarding coronial jurisdiction did not envisage that the issue would require further consideration through the NMN Taskforce or DHSC and was unusually strong in the statement that the Ministry should report without further delay. This is supported by additional documentation from the MNI team in response to family questions in which the delay to date was referred to as *unnecessary*.

Given this I would like to thank you for your invitation to meet to discuss the issue, and would ask that the invitation is extended to Tim Loughton, former MP & Minister and the sponsor of the 2019 Act. Mr Loughton can be reached at [REDACTED]. While your offer included the opportunity to meet with DHSC officials, and I do not object to this, I must be clear that the subject of any meeting must be focused on the issue of coronial jurisdiction and not a wider discussion regarding PMRT, MNSI or other routes, beyond acknowledging their lack of independence and widely accepted issues.

Finally, I would highlight that we have not received responses to the direct numbered questions raised in our previous letters to Ms Atkinson, Mr Norris or via my email forwarded by Sir Gavin. I would appreciate if these could be addressed on the record, but note that it may be necessary to wait until after we have met.

I look forward to hearing from your team to arrange a meeting as soon as practicable.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Copied to:

Sir Gavin Williamson MP
Tim Loughton