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Rt Hon Sarah Jones MP

Minister of State (Minister for Policing and Crime)
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

21 September 2026

Dear Minister,

RE: Autumn 2026 ACMD update on progress with delivery of current work, and proposed plans for the commissioned work on “*Safer Streets*” and “*Violence Against Women and Girls*”.

On behalf of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), I am pleased to provide you with an update on our current programme of work:

1. Update on current workstreams

Government Commissioned Workstreams

- The “*Drivers of powder cocaine use*”, “*Internet facilitated drugs markets*” and “*Cannabis based products for medicinal use*” working groups are concluding their reports. These reports are expected to be published by the end of the year.

Self-commissioned workstreams

- The “*Drug use and chemsex in the LGBT+ community*” and “*Prevention: Development and transitions*” working groups are concluding their reports. These reports are expected to be published in Autumn/Winter 2026.
- The reviews on “*Safer inhalation pipes*” and the “*Definition of a drug misuse death*” have started and we anticipate that the relevant reports will be published by Spring 2027.
- The review on “*Pregabalin and gabapentin harms assessment*” is expected to be completed by Autumn/Winter 2027.

2. Response to previous ACMD report recommendations

We would particularly welcome the Government's responses to the following reports:

- *"A whole-system response to drug prevention in the UK"*. The ACMD agrees with Home Office and Joint Combating Drug Unit officials that the Government response to this report can also cover the responses to the recommendations in the earlier ACMD letter *"ACMD vulnerable groups: young people's drug use"*.
- *"Alkyl nitrites: ACMD exemption consideration"*
- *"Ketamine: an updated review of its use and harms"*

3. ACMD plans for delivery of advice on Safer Streets and Violence Against Women and Girls

The ACMD Council has reviewed the three-year work programme commissioned by the Government to undertake reviews in the Government's key strategies around *"Safer Streets"* and *"Violence Against Women and Girls"*. Outlined below are our proposed plans for the delivery of these reports and our advice and recommendations.

Work proposed to commence in 2027

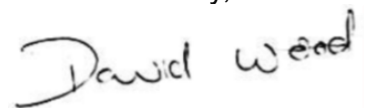
- **Treating drug use in 'prolific offenders':** The ACMD will aim to provide an understanding of the barriers to engaging 'prolific offenders' in treatment and review evidence around accessibility and effectiveness of current treatment services and interventions. This will include the effectiveness of enforced treatment requirements on repeat offenders as a condition of their sentencing or probation and the effectiveness of long-acting buprenorphine for treating opioid dependence.
- **Women and girls' access to treatment services:** The working group will aim to understand the barriers that women and girls face when accessing treatment and support services for their substance use. The group will examine what opportunities there are to improve outcomes for women and girls and how services can be aligned to their specific needs.
- **Role of drugs in exploitation of women and girls:** The working group will review of the role of drugs in exploitation of women and girls and coercive control and is likely to include women and girls' participation in gangs and "county lines".

Work proposed to commence in 2028

- **Drug use in domestic abuse:** This report will explore the role of drugs in domestic abuse and wider violence against women and girls. This will include the role of drugs in perpetrators of abuse as well as by the victims who are at a high risk of developing substance use disorder.
- **Drug use in sexual assault:** The ACMD previously examined drug facilitated sexual assault in 2007, which focused on the role of substance use within the victim. Sexual assaults often involve substance consumption by both the perpetrator and victim. The scope of this work will be expanded to include the role of drugs in perpetrators of sexual assault, as well as updating the previous review in 2007.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the above work plan and its prioritisation as well the government's future priorities for the ACMD.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Professor David Wood
Chair of the ACMD