

From the Leader of Lambeth Council

Our Ref: **Leader 2021/01- 005**

Your Ref:

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities, and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Thursday, 28 January 2021

Sent By Email:
PSRobertJenrick@communities.gov.uk



Dear Secretary of State,

We are disappointed that Lambeth was not invited to bid for any of the £23 million funding made available to support local authorities to expand their vital work on vaccinations for communities most at risk from Covid-19.

Tackling the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 has been at the heart of Lambeth's efforts to support vulnerable residents throughout this crisis. For the last few months, we have worked closely with our partners in the NHS and our community groups on a plan to tackle vaccine hesitancy among our black and ethnic minority residents in particular and to encourage take-up of the vaccine so we can protect people from Covid-19.

This work is resource intensive and requires significant investment and engagement from government to ensure it is effective. This has, so far however, not been forthcoming. We understand boroughs were invited to apply, and even chosen, based on a set of criteria for this limited funding but there has been no transparency about this decision-making approach. It is deeply confusing that one of the most diverse boroughs in the entire country was not invited to bid for it, at a time when we see significant concern in our communities about vaccine hesitancy. The initial figures on the roll-out also indicate that the government's current strategy is failing to reach some of the groups who are most at risk from Covid-19.

Throughout this crisis, top-down national programmes have failed while local government and local public services have stepped into that gap. We know that our communities want to hear from trusted local voices and all evidence shows that such voices would be the best way to reach those who are vaccine hesitant or as yet not fully informed about it.

We know from other boroughs across London that this arbitrary decision has caused similar concern and we support the calls for another immediate round of funding, open

London Borough of Lambeth
Leader's Office
Lambeth Town Hall
Brixton Hill
London SW2 1RW

Telephone: 020 7926 1167
www.lambeth.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

to all boroughs to bid for in an open process, to support councils with the vital work of protecting our most at-risk communities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Hopkins", written over a light grey dotted background.

Councillor Jack Hopkins
Leader of Lambeth Council
Email: jhopkins@lambeth.gov.uk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Dickson", written in a bold, stylized cursive.

Councillor Jim Dickson
Cabinet member for Health & Social Care
Email: Jdickson@Lambeth.gov.uk