



**ALL PARTY LEADERS**

11 November 2019

**ABUSE AND VIOLENCE TOWARDS SHOP WORKERS**

Monday marks 136 days since the Home Office's Call for Evidence on Abuse and Violence Towards Shop Workers closed on 28 June 2019. In those 136 days more than 7,500 of my colleagues in the Co-op alone have been subject to verbal abuse, 800 have been subject to physical violence or threats and 500 have been attacked with a weapon including knives, syringes and hammers.

What my colleagues in the Co-op have faced in those 136 days forms just a part of the 200,000 incidents of abuse and violence towards all shop workers the Association of Convenience Stores estimate have happened across the convenience sector since the Call for Evidence closed.

On 10 September we published academic research from Dr Emmeline Taylor, Associate Professor of Criminology at City University, on the impact of abuse and violence on shop workers. She found that such was the frequency and violence of such abuse and violence shop workers were now often suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

If nothing is done then nothing can change and in another 136 days more of my colleagues will have been abused and attacked leaving permanent scars. I urge all those hoping to form the next Government to commit to taking action to protect shop workers because suffering abuse and violence is not part of the job including prioritising the response the police are able to give and the sanctions available to the courts.

My colleagues matter. Shop Workers matter. Enough is enough.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jo'.

**JO WHITFIELD  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
CO-OP RETAIL**

Registered Office: Co-operative Group Limited  
1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG. Reg No 525R