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August 2022

Dear Police and Crime Commissioners,

Violence and abuse against retail workers has reached a shocking high. According to figures from the British Retail Consortium's most recent Crime Survey, for the period April 2020 to March 2021 there were 1,300 incidents every single day – almost treble the 455 per day in the previous year.

Throughout the pandemic, people in retail worked tirelessly to ensure we had access to the food and goods we needed and wanted. Alongside NHS and care workers, they were rightly applauded by the government and the public for their hard work.

During this time, they were met with an unacceptable level of abuse and violence – each incident taking an emotional toll on them, their families, and their colleagues.

We continue to do all we can to protect our teams. Retailers spent £715 million on crime prevention in 2020/21 - from hiring in-store security teams, training staff on de-escalation, and investing in CCTV and body worn cameras for staff – but police support locally is vital to protecting staff.

We are increasingly concerned about reports of rising levels of violence, abuse, and anti-social behaviour which is partly linked to tackling shoplifting. Ultimately, theft pushes up the cost of operating and results in higher prices for everyone. It's not just the financial cost of theft which is important; customers as well as store, delivery and customer service teams can be left traumatised by such incidents.

We were pleased that our collective efforts to guarantee greater protection for retail workers were acted upon, with an amendment to the new Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 enshrining in law stronger sentences for those found guilty of violence and abuse against retail workers. This amendment sends a very strong signal that assaults of this kind are totally unacceptable but will only serve as a deterrent if the powers it provides are properly and widely used.

Therefore, on behalf of the three million people working in retail, we are writing to ask you to:

- Commit to making retail crime a priority in your local policing plan;
- Work with local businesses to investigate ways to make reporting simpler, to help give the police an accurate picture of the problem;
- Push your local force to investigate all reports of violence and abuse against retail workers, ensuring the matter is treated with the seriousness it deserves;
- Monitor how often the new sentencing guidelines are used in your local area and what effect it has on bringing down violence and abuse against retail workers;

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Registered in England and Wales No. 40572

registered office: 100 Avebury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 1FH



The BRC would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss these issues in more detail, to facilitate this please contact [emma.revell@brc.org.uk](mailto:emma.revell@brc.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,

*Kenny Wilson, Chief Executive, Airwair International - Dr Martens*

*Giles Hurley, Chief Executive Officer - UK and IRE, ALDI*

*Peter Wood, CEO, All Saints Retail*

*John Boumphrey, UK Country Manager, Amazon UK*

*Maria Hollins, Managing Director, Ann Summers*

*Hayley Tatum, Chief People and Corporate Affairs Officer, ASDA*

*Graham Bell, CEO, B&Q*

*Nick Collard, CEO, Bensons for Beds Retail*

*Dawood Pervez, Managing Director Bestway Wholesale, Bestway National Chemists - Well Pharmacy*

*Sebastian Hobbs, Chief Executive, Bestway National Chemists - Well Pharmacy*

*Andrew Goodacre, Chief Executive, BIRA*

*Meryl Halls, Managing Director, Booksellers Association*

*Sebastian James, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Boots*

*Leanne Cahill, CEO, Bravissimo*

*Charmaine Griffiths, CEO, British Heart Foundation*

*Helen Dickinson, Chief Executive, British Retail Consortium*

*Darcy Willson-Rymer, Chief Executive, Card Factory*

*Melinda Paraie, CEO, Cath Kidston*

*Debbie Robinson, Chief Executive, Central England Co-operative*

*Mireille Baumgart, Chairman, Concept Living Limited - BoConcept*

*Adrian Cook, Interim Managing Director UK&I, Costa Coffee*

*Alex Baldock, Group Chief Executive, Currys*

*Fiona Mannion, Managing Director, Damart*

*Chris Holden, CEO, Deichmann Shoes UK*

*Tim Stacey, Chief Executive, DFS Furniture*

*Daniel Rubin, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Dune Group*

*Nick Wilkinson, CEO, Dunelm Group*

*Nigel Murray, Managing Director, EH Booth & Co*

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*Jeremy Hinds, Director, F Hinds*

*Ed Duggan, Finance & Commercial Director, Fishpools*

*Peter Harrison, Chief Executive, Furniture Village*

*Kristof Van Beveren, General Manager UK, Getir UK*

*Roisin Currie, CEO, Greggs*

*Victoria Houghton, Chief Executive, Hamilton & Inches*

*Manju Malhotra, Chief Executive Officer, Harvey Nichols*

*Doug Putman, Owner, hmv*

*Dominic Jordan, CEO, HobbyCraft*

*Michael Casey, Executive Chair, Holland & Barrett*

*Damian McGloughlin, CEO, Homebase*

*James Barnes, Chairman, Horticultural Trades Association*

*Peter Jelkeby, UK & IE Country Manager, IKEA UK*

*Rhys Hughes, President, Interflora*

*Lee Bagnall, CEO JD Outdoor, JD Sports*

*Beth Butterwick, Chief Executive Officer, Jigsaw*

*Pippa Wicks, Executive Director, John Lewis & Partners*

*Neil Piper, Interim Managing Director UK&I, KFC*

*Jamie Givens, CEO UK & Eire, Lacoste UK*

*Steve Knights, CEO, Lakeland*

*Ryan McDonnell, CEO, Lidl GB*

*Kevin Birch, Chief Retail Officer, Lloyds Pharmacy*

*Alia Hawa, Managing Director - UK & Ireland, L'Occitane*

*Debbie Bond, CCO, Lovehoney*

*John Colley, Executive Chairman and CEO, Majestic Wine*

*Stuart Machin, Chief Executive Officer, Marks & Spencer*

*Alistair Macrow, CEO UK&I, McDonald's Restaurants*

*Martin Byrne, CCO, Monica Vinader*

*Steve Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, N Brown*

*Graham Stafford, COO, National Federation of Retail Newsagents*

*Kevin Barrett, Group CEO, Nestware Holdings*

*Helen Connolly, Chief Executive Officer, New Look Retailers*

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Brian McClory, *Managing Director, Ocado Logistics*

Oliver Tress, *Founder & CEO, Oliver Bonas*

Nick Read, *Group CEO, Post Office*

Kari Rodgers, *Retail Director UK, Primark*

Justin Stead, *CEO, Radley+Co*

Howard Saycell, *CEO, RETRA*

Julie Abraham, *CEO, Richer Sounds*

Will Kernan, *CEO, River Island*

Kyron Keogh, *Managing Director, Rox (UK)*

Peter Birks, *CEO, Rymans*

Simon Roberts, *Chief Executive Officer, Sainsbury's*

Doug Winchester, *Managing Director, Savers*

Colin Temple, *Managing Director, Schuh*

Pete Cheema, *CEO, Scottish Grocers' Federation*

John Brodie, *Chief Executive, Scottish Midland Co-operative Society*

John Mewett, *CEO, Screwfix Direct*

Steve Carson, *CEO, ScS Group plc*

Paul Hayes, *CEO, Seasalt*

Andy Lightfoot, *CEO, Space NK*

Louise Hoste, *Managing Director, Spar UK*

Paul Marshall, *Managing Director, Specsavers*

Alex Rayner, *VP & General Manager, Starbucks*

Gordon Mearns, *Managing Director, Sterling Furniture Group*

Paul Kendrick, *CEO, Studio Retail*

Peter Macnab, *CEO, Superdrug Stores*

Julian Dunkerton, *CEO & Founder, Superdry*

Rachel Osborne, *CEO, Ted Baker*

Jason Tarry, *UK CEO, Tesco Stores*

Justin Hampshire, *Chief Executive, TFG Brands*

Linda Campbell, *Global Retail Director, The Body Shop*

Shirine Khoury-Haq, *Interim Chief Executive, The Co-operative Group*

Gill Smith, *Managing Director, The Perfume Shop*

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*Mary Homer, Chief Executive Officer, The White Company*

*Gavin Peck, CEO, The Works*

*Kypros Kyprianou, Group CEO, Theo Paphitis Retail Group*

*Theo Paphitis, Chairman, Theo Paphitis Retail Group*

*Michael Munnely, President, TJX Europe*

*Ian Watson, CEO, Unbound Group*

*Onur Koksal, CEO, Vision Express*

*James Bailey, Executive Director, Waitrose & Partners*

*Nathan Smith, CEO, Whittard of Chelsea*

*Carl Cowling, Group Chief Executive, WHSmith*

*David Wood, CEO, Wickes*

*Jerome Saint-Marc, Chief Executive, Wilko*

*David Potts, Chief Executive, Wm Morrison*

cc: Association of Police and Crime Commissioners  
Paddy Lillis, General Secretary, USDAW  
Tom Pursglove MP, Minister of State (Crime and Policing)

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