Dear Carol,

Thank you for your Parliamentary Question 157205 regarding the number of complaints made by female Armed Forces personnel aged under 18 about sexually inappropriate behaviour, and the numbers of reported sexual assaults since 2015. You will recall that I responded on 1 March 2021 to advise that information relating to the criminal offence of sexual assault is held on the Service Police’s REDCAPS database and that it would take some time to conduct a manual search to positively confirm the number of allegations made by female personnel aged under 18.

I am now able to confirm that a total of 16 allegations of sexual assault were reported to the Service Police forces by female Armed Forces personnel aged under 18 in the period from 1 January 2015 to 24 February 2021. As I stated in my answer of 1 March, all allegations are thoroughly investigated, and support provided to victims. Anyone found to fall short of the Services’ high standards or to have committed an offence is dealt with appropriately, which may include imprisonment and dismissal from service.

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

JOHNNY MERCER MP