

MAYOR OF LONDON

Andrew Boff AM

Chair of the London Assembly
AssemblyChair@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA200323-3063

Date: 13 November 2023

Dear Andrew,

London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 16 March 2023 – Motions

Further to my response of 7 June, please find my reply to the remaining motion set out below, and my apologies for the delay.

Motion 1 – Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

It is my priority to build a better London for everyone. However, sadly, in recent years, we have seen a national epidemic of misogyny and VAWG. Far too many women and girls now feel unsafe going about their daily lives in London and across our country. My refreshed VAWG Strategy 2022-2025 has taken a public health approach and calls on the Criminal Justice System (CJS), the wider public sector, the specialist VAWG sector, and all of society to join in efforts to reduce and ultimately prevent violence.

Charging and prosecution rates for domestic abuse and rape are simply not good enough, and they add to a widespread loss of confidence in the CJS.

Thank you for acknowledging the positive impact my VAWG communications campaign, Have A Word, has had in challenging misogynistic attitudes. This is a multi-year campaign, which will continue this year with evidence-based interventions to enable men to call out misogyny when they see it happening. This July, we launched our new campaign empowering men to challenge misogyny by saying 'maaate' to their mates when they cross the line.

I have also continued my investment in specialist services to support victims of domestic abuse and stalking. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime is working with the Police, CJS partners, and victim-survivor services to improve the identification of and response to domestic abuse and stalking. This includes a reappraisal of the merits of implementing or developing a register for managing serial perpetrators alongside the work the Home Office has committed to undertake as part of its domestic abuse plan. We are working with the London Probation Service to share insights and build an evidence base to improve our understanding of VAWG perpetrators.

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The MPS Commissioner recently published his New Met for London plan 2023-25 and this includes a welcome focus on tackling VAWG. As well as aiming to increase the proportion of positive outcomes for public protection crimes including rape, other serious sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, and harassment and reduce the proportion of victims of those crimes who have been victims of crime before, the MPS is now targeting the 100 offenders who pose the greatest threat to women and girls.

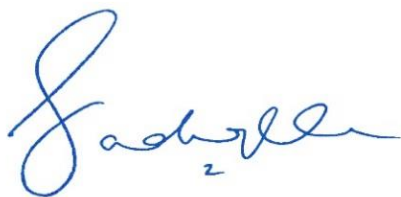
I have welcomed the Assembly's continued leadership on VAWG issues and, as highlighted, your focus on a domestic abuse register and classifying misogyny as a hate crime. These are both policies that I have been advocating for during my mayoralty, including during the passage of the Domestic Abuse Act. I note the Home Office's commitment in February this year to record the most dangerous domestic abusers on the violent and sex offender register. We are keen to work closely with the government on the implementation of this register to ensure it is as effective as possible. I also welcome the commitment from the Home Office to publish a National Perpetrator Strategy, as part of the Domestic Abuse Act. We will continue to work closely alongside the government and partners to ensure that this is delivered as effectively as possible in London.

This focus on perpetrators is also reflected in my 2021 introduction of the GPS tagging pilot for domestic abuse offenders. This targets high-risk offenders being released back to London from prison. To date, this pilot has tagged and monitored over 500 high risk individuals, and the first evaluation report of this pilot has now been published, which evidences the benefits this brings for improved victim protection and enhanced enforcement.

I fully support extending hate crime laws to those based on someone's gender, including misogyny, and for all hate crimes based on protected characteristics to be treated equally. I will continue to lobby for this change.

As Mayor, I am clear that we must not simply respond to VAWG or police our way out of it; we must prevent it. My long-term ambition is to eradicate VAWG in London so that every woman and girl can participate fully in London life without experiencing or fearing harassment, abuse, or violence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the name.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London