

MAYOR OF LONDON

Caroline Pidgeon AM

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

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Thank you for the petition presented to the London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting on 7 June about knife crime on London's streets. The petition sets out the need for an action plan to tackle the escalation in knife crime and urges me to take a public health approach to reducing knife carrying.

Knife crime has no place on our streets, and the increase in these offences over recent years is absolutely unacceptable to me as Mayor, as a Londoner and as a father. I am determined to stamp it out; making London safer for young people is a critical part of my manifesto and my 2017-2021 Police and Crime Plan.

An action plan to tackle the escalation in knife crime was published in June 2017 and a comprehensive set of partnership actions is underway. A copy of the strategy is available at: www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mopac_knife_crime_strategy_june_2017.pdf

The strategy includes the following key areas:

- ✓ **Targeting lawbreakers** – recognising that knife crime has increased and that this is a major concern for the public, the Mayor, and the police. Commitments in this section are focussed on the immediate enforcement response to knife crime.
- ✓ **Keeping deadly weapons off our streets** – addressing the accessibility and availability of knives focusing on retailers and licensing.
- ✓ **Protecting and educating young people** – recognising the importance of prevention and working alongside schools.
- ✓ **Standing with communities, neighbourhoods and families against knife crime** – working with Londoners who want to stand up against knife crime and the harm it does to communities and families.
- ✓ **Supporting victims of knife crime** – ensuring that improving support to victims is at the heart of a holistic response.
- ✓ **Offering a way out of crime** – recognising that young people should be offered interventions which help them move away from criminality towards a brighter future.

The petition urges me to take a collaborative public health approach to reducing knife carrying. We have been clear that knife crime is not something that can be solved by the police or criminal justice system alone. My Knife Crime Strategy is a public health approach, focused on prevention, diversion and enforcement. It recognises the benefits in taking a public health approach – one that

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focuses on creating positive change, addressing underlying vulnerabilities, reducing risk factors, and strengthening protective factors - which has been shown to be most effective in reducing knife crime. My Knife Crime Strategy supports a public health approach in the following ways:

- Allocating £1.5m to specialist youth workers to support young victims of violence in London's four major trauma centres over the last three years; committing a further £835,000 to services in the major trauma centres between 2018 and 2020.
- Committing a further £1.8m to develop new services in priority A&E departments in boroughs that have high levels of knife crime this year. Total investment in specialist youth support in hospitals is £2.6m over the next two years.
- Supporting a trauma informed approach when commissioning rehabilitation services.
- Supporting alignment with existing child and adolescent mental health services and working closely with health partners to jointly commission better provision and lobby for more powers and budget to do so from central government.
- Working with partners to produce a toolkit with information and advice on what to do in the aftermath of a knife crime, aiming to help front line workers such as teachers and doctors, faith groups and community groups to recognise the signs of trauma in family members and friends affected by a knife crime and to take appropriate steps to support them.
- Working in partnership with the NHS to continue with the Information Sharing to Tackle Violence programme. Under this programme, A&E departments share with the police anonymous data pertaining to where, when and what violent crimes have been committed to better inform partnership responses and intervention approaches and assist in building a better picture of the level, nature and locations of violent incidents in the city.

The petition asks that we learn from the approach taken in Glasgow. I am always keen to listen and learn from examples of where effective interventions work, whether from Scotland or anywhere else. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has undertaken visits over the last few years as part of their ongoing learning and exchange with other forces at home and overseas. My Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the MPS Commissioner visited Police Scotland in February to understand how Glasgow reduced violence there. We continue to work with experts from around the world, including Scotland and New York. However, all major cities are different and it is right that we have a bespoke plan for London, which is what the knife crime strategy represents.

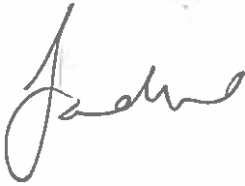
Additionally, we recognise the value of collaborative leadership in responding to a complex issue such as knife crime. As Mayor, I bring together partners across London; my Deputy Mayor leads an executive board and cross London partnership work to tackle knife crime. We are constantly learning from others by regularly convening working groups of boroughs, police, third sector and education experts. For example, on 27 June we brought together senior officers from London's boroughs, including Directors of Public Health, to share best practice and ideas on reducing knife crime.

Lastly, the petition asks for more youth workers and support for teachers and parents. In February I announced a new £45m Young Londoners Fund. The fund will help vulnerable children and young adults develop, particularly those that have been left behind or marginalised, and work to prevent them being sucked into crime. Sport, culture, citizenship, environment, education and volunteering will be central to successful bids. The three-year fund will see £10m a year be made available for local communities, charities and schools. More information is available at: www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/education-and-youth/young-londoners/mayors-young-londoners-fund.

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I hope that this provides some reassurance that the issue of knife crime is being taken extremely seriously, and that I am committed to making London an even better and safer place for all.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq', written in a cursive style.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London