



Home Office

Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of State for Crime,
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30 March 2022

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 14 February to the Home Secretary following the London Assembly Plenary Meeting held on 10 February. The Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration has responded to the first part of your correspondence and forwarded your letter for me to respond to the second motion as the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Probation. I apologise for the overall delay in responding substantively to your letter.

This motion relates to the Assembly's concern that Black Londoners are more likely to be victims and perpetrators of knife crime.

Tackling knife crime is a priority, and the Government is determined to confront the scourge of violence devastating our communities. Each young life lost to violence is one too many, and we are doing everything in our power to keep young people safe.

The Home Office is committed to working in partnership with others, including charities, voluntary organisations, and communities with high rates of knife crime. It is important that we work across government and with the statutory, private, and voluntary sectors to deliver change.

The Government has made £130.5 million available this year to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime; this includes £35.5 million for Violence Reduction Units (VRUs), which bring together local partners to tackle the drivers of violence in their area. VRUs are delivering a range of early intervention and prevention programmes to divert people away from a life of crime, and have reached over 300,000 young people in the first two years alone.

You have mentioned the London VRU which has, from the outset, identified disproportionality as a major issue within the capital, and directed funding accordingly. Within their 2019/20 Strategy, the VRU stated that a key objective was to "Recognise the disproportionate number of young Black men in the Criminal Justice System and target supportive interventions towards them."

A good example of the activity they deliver is through the VRU's MyEnds programme. The programme is designed to provide support capacity and funding for hyper-locally designed and community co-produced interventions in neighbourhoods affected by high and sustained levels of violence. In essence, going to disproportionately affected communities and working with them to design interventions that they want and need.

In addition, from the £130.5 million we are investing, £30 million will support the police to take targeted action in parts of England and Wales most affected by serious violence through the Grip programme, which uses data to identify violence hotspots and target operational activity in those 2 areas. Through the Grip pilot in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, there was a 73.5% drop in violent crime in hot spot areas on patrol days.

Through the Prime Minister's Crime and Justice Task Force, the Government has made it clear that the focus on enforcement must be matched with a focus on prevention and early intervention. To help drive the cross-government strategic response to serious violence, we are therefore taking action across a range of services including children's social care and education. We are also investing £200 million in a Youth Endowment Fund, to ensure that those most at risk are given the opportunity to turn away from violence and lead positive lives.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kit Malthouse', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP