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Dr - Navin,

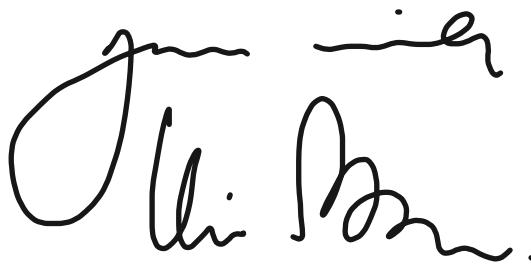
Thank you for your letter of 20 November on behalf of the London Assembly (Plenary), concerning its motion of 6 June 2019 calling for a public inquiry into the death of Blair Peach in 1979. I am replying as the Minister of State for Crime and Policing.

The Assembly also calls on the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to publish an unredacted version of the Cass Report, the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) investigation of allegations concerning its officers' involvement in the circumstances of Mr Peach's death. As you will be aware, in 2010 the MPS published a significant amount of material concerning Mr Peach's death including a redacted version of the Cass Report. This followed independent advice from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) which stated there was nothing which would then justify carrying out a further investigation.

I am not aware of any new evidence emerging or being presented since then that would require the CPS to reconsider its advice and, as you will appreciate, it is a matter for MOPAC to consider releasing an unredacted version of the report. The Government takes police integrity very seriously – it lies at the heart of public confidence in the police and underpins our model of policing by consent. To be effective the police need the public's support and co-operation. There have been very significant changes in the oversight of policing at every level since Mr Peach's death, including major reforms to criminal procedure, changes to public order policing and practice, greater external scrutiny and greater local accountability with the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (and MOPAC) in 2012.

There is a comprehensive legislative framework for handling allegations of police misconduct – including the vital role of the police "watchdog", the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in handling the most serious and sensitive matters. As the Assembly recognises, the IOPC is crucial in a system of police scrutiny and complaints that functions effectively and commands public confidence. The introduction of further provisions through the Policing and Crime Act 2017 has increased the powers of the IOPC, clarified its investigative processes and further safeguards its independence. These reforms were introduced in 2018 and 2020 alongside wider reforms to the police discipline and complaints systems. These changes addressed existing gaps in the IOPC's powers and enhance its ability to secure and maintain public confidence in those systems.

In conclusion, I am of the view at this time that a public inquiry into Mr Peach's death is not justified.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kit Malthouse', with a large initial 'K' and a stylized 'M'.

Kit Malthouse MP