

MAYOR OF LONDON

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Thank you for your letter of 12 April about the increase in knife crime and street violence in London, and for passing me the concerns of your constituents about this.

Three deaths from knife crime in 24 hours is extremely concerning. I am very aware that serious youth violence has increased in both Tower Hamlets and Newham, with only Barking and Dagenham seeing a slight decline in victims from 238 in January 2012 to 226 in March 2017.

I know that we need to do more and I want to reassure you that making London safer for young people is a critical part of my manifesto and my recently published 2017-2021 Police and Crime Plan. I will launch and implement a new knife crime strategy this summer, that focuses resources on tackling the city's gangs, cracking down on shops selling knives and working on tougher community payback for those caught with knives, in addition to jail time for those who commit these crimes. Prevention and early intervention will also ensure that schools and communities play their vital role in addressing knife crime.

Cressida Dick, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, has put addressing knife and gun crime as one of her top priorities. This will include better preventative work to deter people from carrying weapons, and enforcement including the use of stop and search to target those who still do. I am confident that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) are committed to tackling knife crime and violent crime. Current MPS operations include Operation Teal and Operation Equinox, which looks at knife crime in night time activities, and involves visible patrols and weapon sweeps amongst other activities. Operation Sceptre also targets habitual knife carriers and seeks to engage with the public to increase awareness and provide opportunities to surrender weapons. So far, 18,000 knives have been surrendered and over 4,700 knives have been seized since the operation launched a year ago.

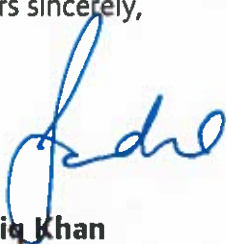
My Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC) funds a range of targeted and specialist provisions across London, to help support some of our most vulnerable people away from crime. For example, we are funding specialist youth provision and interventions in every London borough to support our most vulnerable in exiting offending behaviour.

Both my new Police and Crime Plan and Knife Crime Strategy will have a focus on creating positive change; addressing underlying vulnerabilities and strengthening protective factors such as environmental and socio-economic challenges.

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I hope that this provides some reassurance that these issues are taken extremely seriously, and that I am committed to making London an even better and safer place for all.

Yours sincerely,



Sadia Khan
Mayor of London