

Dear Andrew,

March 17th, 2025

As I prepare to step down from my role as Chair of the London Youth Assembly, I feel it is important to formally share with you the recommendations that our Assembly has put forward for the next term. I do so with great respect and gratitude for the support you have shown us over the last two years, which has played a significant role in enabling us to work effectively and advocate for the voices of young Londoners.

One of the key recommendations I wish to highlight is the urgent need for a greater focus on addressing children's and women's abuse. As you know, I have the privilege of serving as an ambassador for Kids Out, an organisation that works tirelessly to support women and children who have been affected by domestic abuse. Through this role, I have witnessed the profound impact abuse has on children, and the long-term consequences it can have on their well-being and development. I believe that more must be done to both prevent and address abuse, with a focus on strengthening support services for victims and providing education around healthy relationships. The Assembly recommends a more robust response, particularly for vulnerable groups, ensuring they are given the resources they need to rebuild their lives. Abuse, in all its forms, remains a widespread issue, and this must be a priority in the upcoming Assembly term.

Another critical issue that the London Youth Assembly want to address is the rise in crime across London, particularly violent crime and its impact on young people. We are deeply concerned about the increase in violent crime, including knife crime, that is affecting our communities. The LYA believes it is essential for the next Assembly term to focus on this growing problem. Crime, in all its forms, has escalated in recent years, and we feel it is time to apply more pressure on the Mayor of London to address this issue effectively. It is vital that the London Assembly holds the Mayor to account for his actions on crime prevention and works to ensure that both the police and community organisations have the resources they need to make London safer for everyone. We call for a greater investment in youth programs and local community initiatives that can offer positive alternatives to crime and violence. It is essential that we address these issues head-on and work towards creating safer, more resilient communities for young people across the city.

In addition to crime, another pressing concern for the London Youth Assembly is the rising epidemic of vaping among young people. This trend has become a serious issue, with many young Londoners experimenting with vaping without fully understanding the long-term health risks. While the health impacts of vaping are still being researched, the London Youth Assembly believes that the evidence that is already available points to serious concerns around addiction, respiratory problems, and mental health. We recommend a comprehensive public health campaign aimed at educating young people about the risks of vaping and a tightening of regulations around the marketing and sale of e-cigarettes to minors within London. We also urge schools to continue to

take a proactive role in raising awareness of the dangers of vaping and providing support for those who may already be affected.

On a more collaborative note, one of the most important recommendations is the need to ensure that the successful partnership between the London Assembly and the London Youth Assembly continues. This collaborative approach has been central to our work, and we are extremely grateful for the support that you and your colleagues have provided. We sincerely hope that the next Assembly term continues to prioritise youth engagement will fosters an environment in which young people are not only heard but are actively involved in shaping policies that impact their lives. We want to ensure that this collaborative approach does not end, and that the voices of young Londoners remain central to decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the London Youth Assembly recommends that the London Youth Achievement Awards be established as a permanent event within the Assembly's annual calendar. This event will be an important recognition of the incredible achievements of young Londoners and will provide a platform to celebrate their hard work, dedication, and positive contributions to society. Making this event a permanent fixture would help inspire and motivate young people across the city to continue striving for success and to be proud of their accomplishments.

Finally, on a personal note, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to you for all the hard work and support you have given the London Youth Assembly especially over the last year. Your dedication to youth issues has been invaluable, and we are deeply grateful for the positive difference you have helped make in our work. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and I have no doubt that your leadership will have a lasting impact on London and its young people.

Thank you once again for everything, Andrew. It has been a privilege to work alongside you.

Yours sincerely,
Ashan.

Ashan S. Khehra

Chair of the London Youth Assembly

Mr. Andrew Boff AM