



Peter Aldous MP, Daniel Zeichner MP  
Co-Chairs, East of England APPG  
Councillor Matthew Hicks  
Chair, East of England LGA

By email: [steve@devoconnect.co.uk](mailto:steve@devoconnect.co.uk)

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16 January 2023

Dear Peter, Daniel and Matthew,

Thank you for your joint email of 20 December to the Home Secretary, regarding the Levelling Up Crime Mission and how it applies to the East of England. I am replying as the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire with responsibility for this policy area.

I am grateful for you taking the time to share your report and the recommendations on the Levelling Up Crime Mission, which particularly apply to reducing serious violence. Reducing crime is an essential part of our Levelling Up agenda – we cannot transform people's lives across the country if certain areas remain blighted by crimes such as serious violence and anti-social behaviour. I am also pleased to see that your recommendations closely align with the work we are delivering, including the importance of taking an evidence-based approach, the benefit of targeting our funding effectively, and the need for strong partnership working.

This Government is providing place-based funding to help reduce crime in local communities. Through the Safer Streets Fund, for example, which provides investment into innovative as well as traditional interventions to improve the safety of public places, we have provided over £6 million of funding in the East of England.

Additionally, the Government has made £130 million available this financial year (2022/2023) to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime, in the areas of England and Wales which experience the greatest volumes of serious violence, building on similar levels of investment in previous years. This includes £64 million for funding 20 Violence Reduction Units and £30 million for the Grip hotspot policing programme.

We adopt a public health approach to tackling serious violence through our network of Violence Reduction Units, which bring together local partners to understand and agree what the root causes of violence in their area are, to deliver a range of early intervention and prevention programmes. These activities are designed to divert people away from a life of crime. As you will know, there are Violence Reduction Units in the areas of Bedfordshire and Essex.

As your recommendations suggest, the drivers of serious violence are complex and preventing further tragedy is the shared responsibility upon all in public service – not just

the police. The Serious Violence Duty will be coming into effect in January 2023 in England and Wales. This places a new legal requirement on a range of public sector organisations to share information locally to reduce incidents of violence.

Furthermore, as you state, understanding the drivers of serious violence is essential. We have provided £200 million over ten years for the Youth Endowment Fund to fund and evaluate early intervention and prevention initiatives to help children and young people at risk of exploitation and involvement in serious violence. This supports how the Government responds to serious violence by building an evidence base around what works in preventing youth violence and making this accessible to practitioners.

Finally, to further support policing in the efforts to reduce crime, the Government has provided the funding for an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023; the biggest increase in decades. 15,343 additional officers have been recruited in England and Wales through the Police Uplift Programme as at 30 September 2022. In the east of England forces have already recruited 1,182 additional officers to 30 September 2022, against a total allocation across these forces of 1,541 to be recruited by March 2023. It is for Chief Constables and elected Police and Crime Commissioners to target their resources (including the additional officers) to tackle local priorities.

I hope this response has provided some reassurance that we are working collaboratively to reduce crime and to achieve the Levelling Up Crime Mission both in the East of England, and across England and Wales.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Rt Hon Chris Philp MP**