

Letter from the Home Secretary on measures to tackle serious violence

I have received an update from the Home Secretary on the measures the Government is taking to tackle serious violence:

Dear Colleague,

Tackling serious violence is a top priority for the Government. We must do whatever we can to stop the terrible murders and stabbings we have seen on our streets. The Government's Serious Violence Strategy, published in April 2018, set out a very significant programme of work, however, it has become clear that we must go further in view of the continuing level of violence, especially after the fatal stabbings of teenagers we have seen in recent weeks. That is why the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the Spring Statement today that there will be £100 million additional funding in 2019/20 to tackle serious violence, including £80m of new funding from the Treasury. This builds on the roundtable I had with senior police officers last week, where I asked them about the resources they needed to fight violent crime.

That is why the majority of the investment will largely go towards supporting police forces, especially where violent crime is impacting the most. These forces will take immediate steps to make our streets safer through an increased operational presence and patrolling supported with better intelligence.

It is also important that we recognise that greater law enforcement on its own will not reduce serious violence. We must continue to focus on prevention. That is why this funding will also support multi-agency Violence Reduction Units. In crime hotspot areas, and elsewhere, the new units will bring all the necessary interests and sectors together locally to focus on the effective measures that must be taken. We will prioritise investment in targeted police capacity to tackle serious violence and support for Violence Reduction Units in our Spending Review discussions.

The announcement today follows the largest annual increase in police funding in England and Wales since 2010 through the 2019/20 police settlement. It represents an increase in total police funding of up to £970 million if all Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) use the full precept flexibility we have provided. I am very pleased to see that the vast majority of PCCs are making use of their full precept flexibility. Many are proposing to use this increase in funding to support additional recruitment, including almost 3000 new police officers.

The first role of Government is to protect the public and that is why I will always be on the side of the police and why we are taking determined action to stop serious violence.

Rt Hon. Sajid Javid MP