

News story: Home Office hosts North East serious violence event

The event, held near Darlington, is the latest in a series of engagement events led by the Home Office to help local partners to take action in their communities.

Partners from police, health, education, social services, youth offending services, housing, local authorities and charities will attend to discuss what national and regional support is available as well to discuss how a new public health approach will see all agencies working together to stop violent crime.

The Police and Crime Commissioners for Durham, Cleveland and Northumbria will also be in attendance to discuss how to ensure how they can tackle violent crime together.

Crime Minister Victoria Atkins said:

Every day, violence is claiming lives on our streets and within communities right across the country.

The need to tackle this issue could not be more immediate, or the impact on families and communities more real.

While tough law enforcement is essential, it is also important to find long term solutions, particularly to tackle the root causes of serious violence.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria, Dame Vera Baird QC said:

This event shows that the three North East police forces are determined to continue tackling serious violent crimes.

We are committed to working with partners to show that positive outcomes can be achieved in addressing this issue. Northumbria Police continue to be at the heart of our local communities, working with neighbouring forces and the Home Office.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Durham, Ron Hogg said:

Our approach to tackling serious violence includes a commitment to early intervention so that young people make positive choices rather than going down the wrong path. Durham Constabulary's checkpoint scheme provides interventions for adults committing lower level offences and who otherwise would not have received

support to desist from further offending.

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland, Barry Coppinger said:

We welcome the opportunity to bring together partners from across the region to discuss local plans to tackle serious violence.

In Cleveland, the Early Intervention Youth Fund award will give us the ability to take forward this important work and prevent victimisation.

The government's Serious Violence Strategy places local action at its core, with a commitment to hosting events across the country being one of 61 other commitments made to tackle violent crime.

In April, the Home Secretary announced £100million of funding to tackle serious violence across England and Wales. Yesterday (Wednesday 8 May), the Home Secretary announced that 18 police forces which experience high levels of violent crime will receive £63.4 million of this fund, including £2.3 million for Northumbria. The money will be used for additional officer deployments, improved intelligence, and operations such as targeting habitual knife carriers.

Around a third of the funding – £35million – will support the setting up of violence reduction units (VRUs) and other preventative activity across the country. VRUs are a multi-agency approach bringing together police, health agencies, local government, and community representatives to tackle violent crime and its underlying causes.

Another £1.6million is being spent on ensuring forces collect better data to help their planning and ensure targeted action.

The local engagement event follows the first meeting of a new ministerial Taskforce on Serious Youth Violence, which was chaired by the Prime Minister in Downing Street.