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Mr Mike Hill MP
Mr Alex Cunningham MP
Mr Matt Vickers MP
Mr Andy McDonald MP
Mr Simon Clarke MP
Mr Jacob Young MP

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Dear Colleagues,

Preventing Serious Violence in Cleveland

As you may be aware, over the past year I have been campaigning for Cleveland to receive its fair share of central government funding, to reduce the area's high levels of serious violence.

To provide some context, Cleveland has the third highest levels of violent crime per 100,000 population in the country – and comes sixth highest for knife crime. Most serious violence offences in Cleveland are increasing at a higher rate than the national average.

At the heart of these statistics are people and families, who find their lives torn apart by the lasting impact serious violence has on them and the wider community.

Cleveland Police do their very best in responding to violent incidents once they have occurred, but the Government's own Serious Violence Strategy highlights the need to 'get ahead' of the problem – and to prevent violent crime before it happens.

Unfortunately, Cleveland did not receive any funding from the Home Office's £135m investment in local police forces and OPCCs, which allowed many areas to establish dedicated Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) to develop a multi-agency approaches to diversion and intervention.



The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is an accredited Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation.

For approximately £1.2m, we can establish the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV), delivering multi-agency interventions and initiatives to divert young people away from crime and to work with individuals with escalating offending behaviour.

We have raised the issue nationally on a number of occasions over the last 12 months, including two letters to Home Secretary Priti Patel and ongoing correspondence with Policing Minister Kit Malthouse.

May I extend my thanks to Alex for recently raising the issue directly with the Home Secretary in the House, to which she responded: *“If there is more that we can do to tackle serious violent crime, we will absolutely do that”*.

I’m pleased to update you that on 21 July, members of my Office had a constructive and positive conversation with representatives from the Home Office, in which they agreed to explore other funding streams to improve the situation in Cleveland. They were impressed with our proposals and I’m confident we have established a joint commitment to find solutions. We are due to meet with them again in September.

We continue to work closely with our partners on crime reduction programmes, including Middlesbrough’s Heroin Assisted Treatment scheme, Cleveland Divert – our adult custody diversion scheme and most recently our £1m Safer Streets grant to install alley gates, CCTV and improved lighting in our most vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Preventing further victimisation caused by serious violence remains a central theme in my latest 12-month plan, a plan I never envisaged drawing up pre-Covid, but which sets out some achievable goals for the next year.

I hope I can count on your support in seeking to end the harm caused to our communities by violent crime and on behalf of the residents of Cleveland, I would appreciate any assistance you can provide in helping our cause.

Yours sincerely



Barry Copping
Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland