

Justice Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA
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Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP
Attorney General
102 Petty France
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SW1H 9AJ

31 July 2020

Dear Attorney General,

Thank you for appearing before the Justice Committee on Tuesday 21 July. It was a useful evidence session during which many topics were covered, and we are grateful to you for your attendance. I am writing to follow up on some specific matters raised during the session.

You helpfully provided the Committee with figures about the number of fixed penalty notices that have been issued by police under Coronavirus regulations and the number that have entered the court system. You acknowledged, however, that the outcome of about 40% of the 15,591 fixed penalty letters sent is not yet known. We would be grateful if you could provide us with data on these cases when it is available.

You told the Committee that you agree with the recommendation of our predecessor's 2018 report on disclosure: that the Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure be updated at regular intervals. Please could you clarify how regularly you intend the guidelines to be updated?

You discussed your role of superintendence over the SFO and the department's place within the Government's Asset Recovery Action Plan, alongside the Home Office and HMRC. We would be interested to hear whether you think the SFO is sufficiently integrated into the action plan. As was raised by Dr Kieran Mullan MP, we also suggest that there is a case for greater transparency over the specific contribution of the SFO to asset recovery in Government statistical bulletins.

Finally, you provided the Committee with figures about the number of private prosecutions referred to the CPS during 2019-20, and how many of those were then taken over by the CPS and either continued or discontinued. We would be grateful if you could confirm whether you have access to data on the total number of private prosecutions that take place, or only on those referred to the CPS.

I look forward to receiving your response on these matters.

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Neill', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sir Robert Neill MP
Chair
Justice Committee