



Home Office

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP
Minister of State for Crime, Policing
and Fire

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Pete Wishart MP
Chair
Scottish Home Affairs Select Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

01 May 2024

Dear Pete,

FIREARMS LICENSING CONSULTATION

Thank you for your letter of 19 April about the progress of the Government's response following the consultation that was held on recommendations made on changes to firearms licensing.

The recommendations made to the Home Office were about reducing the risks that lawful ownership and use of firearms can present. Public safety is our key priority, but measures to manage the risks to public safety must be proportionate and balanced with the fact that the vast majority of those who are licensed to possess and use firearms are law abiding and cause no concern.

Ministers have been considering the wide range of views that were provided through the consultation and this has been done in parallel with other work on firearms licensing, including looking at the increase in fees for a firearms certificate or renewal. I am also consulting with Ministerial colleagues across Government on the outcomes of the consultation and proposals for change and, once this has been done, we will be in a position to publish the Government response. I am afraid I cannot give an exact timescale for this but I have asked my officials to let the Clerk of your Committee know when the Government response will be published in Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP
Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire



Scottish Affairs Committee

Rt Hon Chris Philp MP
Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire
Home Office

By email

19 April 2024

Dear Chris,

I am writing to you regarding progress of the Home Office's consultation on recommendations for changes to firearms licensing.

As you will recall, the Scottish Affairs Committee published its report on *Firearms licensing regulations in Scotland* in December 2022. In response to our report, as well as the outcomes of the Prevention of Future Deaths reports issued by the Senior Coroner for Plymouth, Torbay and South Devon and the report by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), both following the fatal shootings in Keyham, Plymouth in August 2021, the Home Office launched a consultation on the recommendations made by my Committee, the Senior Coroner for Plymouth, Torbay and South Devon and the IOPC.

The consultation closed in August 2023 and, to date, no outcome from the consultation has been published. I understand Ministers are currently considering the consultation responses, and that the Government expects to publish its response "shortly".

I would like to take the opportunity to stress the importance of this consultation reaching a conclusion as soon as possible – particularly given the impending General Election. It is imperative that no further time is wasted before we learn lessons and take action to strengthen the controls on access to firearms in order to prevent the devastating shootings we have seen in recent years.

With that in mind, I would be grateful if you could provide further specific details on when we can expect to see an outcome from the consultation. I would also be grateful if you could outline the reasons why we have not seen progress on this important issue to date.

Yours sincerely

Pete Wishart MP
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee