



Scottish Affairs Committee

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

By email

13 May 2024

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your response of 1 May regarding the Home Office's consultation on recommendations for changes to firearms licensing.

The Committee was disappointed to hear that the Government is unable to provide a timescale for its response to the consultation, given that the consultation itself closed in August 2023, and given that the Scottish Affairs Committee has been awaiting action on these issues since our report in December 2022. The Committee took a great deal of evidence during the course of our inquiry, and I know it will be a source of ongoing concern to communities affected by tragic recent incidents, including those on the Isle of Skye, that the Government is not able to commit to a date for outlining the reforms it expects to pursue in response to the issues we raised.

I understand from your letter that you are considering the consultation responses in parallel with undertaking other work on firearms licensing, and engaging with other Ministerial colleagues across Government on the consultation proposals. I welcome the approach of engaging across Government, but I must reiterate the importance of ensuring that this work is concluded at pace. People across Scotland should not be expected to wait indefinitely for the Government to take action on this serious matter.

I would therefore ask once again that you indicate a timescale for the publication of the Government response to this consultation. If you are unable to provide this, I would ask that you at least commit to a response being published before the impending dissolution of Parliament.

Yours sincerely

Pete Wishart MP
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee