



Home Office

Home Secretary

2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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Dear Colleague,

New Serious Violence Legal Duty Consultation and Section 60 Stop and Search Powers

Consultation on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach to prevent and tackle serious violence

As you will know, I am deeply concerned about the rise in serious violence, which is robbing too many children and young people of their futures. I am determined to do everything in my power to ensure we have the strongest possible response in place. Law enforcement plays an absolutely key role and, as announced in the Spring Statement, we will be providing a further £100m in 19/20 to boost funding for police and communities most affected by serious violence. The police are doing an excellent job in challenging circumstances, but this alone is not enough. Tackling this problem successfully requires a multi-agency approach, drawing together all key partners so we can tackle the root causes of violence. Intervening early and well to ensure that young people do not get sucked into the spiral of crime and violence is vital. We will not leave a generation of young people behind.

We know that different risk factors can impact on an individual's vulnerability and susceptibility to becoming a victim or perpetrator of serious violence. These risk factors include domestic abuse, truancy, school exclusions and substance abuse. Evidence suggests that targeted interventions can help mitigate and protect children and young people against these factors. Studies generally find that being poorer, more vulnerable and more marginalised are among these risk factors which means that offenders and victims are statistically more likely to come from poor, vulnerable or marginalised backgrounds. Evidence suggests that targeted interventions can help mitigate and protect children and young people against these factors.

Violent crime is like a contagious disease and we must prevent it spreading further and roll it back. In order to do so it is essential that public agencies work side by side with the

voluntary and community sector. The Government is today announcing the publication of a consultation on a new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence. This would include:

- different organisations working together through partnerships to prevent and tackle serious violence as a priority;
- involving and consulting communities and young people;
- regular sharing between agencies of data and intelligence to identify those most at risk of becoming affected by serious violence;
- using that information to develop a programme of early interventions;
- building partnerships that are not constrained by organisational, professional or geographical boundaries;
- partners working together to agree joint funding for services;
- using evidence including relevant evaluations to inform decision-making; and
- organisations being held accountable for their work on serious violence, including being subject to inspections.

The Government welcomes responses to the consultation document from those with expertise in working with young people at risk of criminal involvement, re-offending or victimisation, those involved in law enforcement and, more generally, the communities affected by serious violence including the voluntary and community sector. This includes relevant professionals, such as those working in social care, education, law enforcement, local government, community safety, youth services, offender management, public health and healthcare; and, in recognition of multi-agency approaches outside England and Wales, we would also welcome responses from across the UK.

The consultation, which launched, 1 April, will run for a period of eight weeks, closing on 28 May and can be found on the Gov.UK website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-new-legal-duty-to-support-multi-agency-action>

Stop and Search: Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

The police must be supported in the vital work they do to make our streets safe. Therefore, as of 31 March 2019, the Government has lifted two conditions set out in the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme (BUSSS) regarding use of Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPOA) 1994. We are making it simpler for police in seven force areas (the Metropolitan Police, West Midlands, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, South Wales and Greater Manchester) to use section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPOA) 1994, so as to:

- reduce the level of authorisation required for a Section 60 from senior officer to inspector; and
- lower the degree of certainty required by the authorising officer so they must reasonably believe an incident involving serious violence ‘may’, rather than ‘will’, occur

Section 60 powers allow all individuals, within a specific area and for a limited amount of time, to be searched for weapons in anticipation of serious violence without suspicion. Such searches, when used correctly, are an important operational tool that enable forces to dissipate potential violent situations or recover offending items, for example, in anticipation of retaliatory or escalating levels of gang violence.

The changes will be piloted in seven police forces who collectively account for around 60 per cent of total national knife crime. This will mean there are 3,000 more officers able to authorise the use of these powers, if required, and that the forces under the greatest pressure can feel more confident using these powers where appropriate.

These changes will be reviewed after six months, and a year - at which point we will decide on next steps. The College of Policing will also work alongside forces to create new guidelines on how best the police can engage with communities on the use of stop and search. We will also continue to support the use of stop and search where fair and effective, by all other forces.

We do not underestimate the impact stop and search has on communities and individuals. We know that to maintain public confidence in its use, the power must be used in a fair, lawful and effective manner. The police use these powers to help make the local community safer by preventing and detecting crime. This, of course, includes black and minority ethnic communities. If your ethnicity is black, you are four times more times likely than white people to be a victim of homicide. The Race Disparity Unit will work with the College of Policing to monitor the impact of these changes on community relations.

The police are on the front line in the battle against serious violence and it is vital that we give them the right tools to do their jobs. Stop and search can be an effective tool, when combined with other targeted interventions to disrupt crime, take weapons off our streets and keep us safe. We have been clear that we support the necessary and proportionate use of stop and search powers to tackle serious violence and are determined to work with the police to crack down on serious violent crime.

I know that like me, all members of the House will have very serious concerns about knife crime and the violence on our streets. I am very willing to discuss this issue with any members who should wish to meet with me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Javid', with a small flourish at the end.

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP

