

Murder Sentencing Consultation

I have received the letter below from the Minister for Sentencing regarding the Murder Sentencing Consultation which was launched today.

Around a quarter of all homicides in England and Wales are committed by the partner, ex-partner, or relative of the victim. Most of these domestic murders take place in the home. When a weapon is used, such as a kitchen knife, it is normally already at the scene. This means that although weapons are often used in domestic murders, these offences generally do not qualify for one of the higher starting points in sentencing. The perpetrators will usually receive a lesser sentence because the weapon was already in the home.

The consultation seeks views on whether a higher starting point should apply to murders preceded by controlling or coercive behaviour against the murder victim, and to all murders committed with a knife or other weapon – a change that would likely result in higher minimum terms in these cases.

You can read more about the consultation and how to contribute here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/murder-sentencing/murder-sentencing-consultation#:~:text=This%20consultation%20seeks%20views%20on,minimum%20terms%20in%20these%20cases.>



Ministry
of Justice

Gareth Bacon MP
Minister for Sentencing

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

MoJ ref: SUB110665

27 November 2023

Dear John,

MURDER SENTENCING CONSULTATION

I am writing to inform you that today, 27 November, a public consultation was launched on a minimum term starting point for (i) murders preceded by controlling or coercive behaviour against the murder victim, and (ii) all murders committed using a knife or other weapon.

The Government committed to launching this consultation as part of the response to the Domestic Homicide Sentencing Review. In this response, which was published in July, we committed to introduce legislation which will mean that, for the first time, the seriousness of domestic murders and the particular harms that arise in these cases will be recognised in our sentencing framework. We have now introduced legislation to give domestic murders specialist consideration in the sentencing framework for murder.

While these measures mark a step change in the way in which our sentencing framework responds to cases of domestic murder, we recognise that there are issues which would benefit from further consideration, beyond the recommendations made in the review undertaken by Clare Wade KC.

This consultation is being launched in order to ensure that all options for reform in this area have been fully explored. The views collected through this consultation will help inform whether any further reform to the sentencing framework is required, beyond that which has already been committed to in response to the Domestic Homicide Sentencing Review.

Yours Ever

GARETH BACON MP