

# July Board Report

We're putting the party back on track so we can achieve the sort of successes in future that we all so desperately want, and that our country needs.

Problems with the current way of doing things make it harder for us to win elections and to give members a real say in what happens. This was one of the major conclusions from the [Dorothy Thornhill election review](#), which called for major improvements in how the party runs its own affairs.

At our meeting this weekend, the Federal Board (FB) therefore agreed three major steps forward.

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## The experience, judgement and vision to take our party forward

I am excited for the future of the Liberal Democrats. I know that together, we can put more Liberal Democrats in town halls, council chambers and Parliaments across the country and kick Boris Johnson out of Downing Street.

The maths are simple. We are in second in 91 seats across the country and in 80 of them, we're against the Conservatives. If we want to make sure we don't have a Tory government in 2025 then Liberal Democrats have to take seats off the Conservatives.

I've been beating the Conservatives all my political life, from local Government to the heart of Government. I won my seat in Kingston in 1997 when it wasn't even a target seat, and have won it 5 more times since. I fought the Tories in Government and trebled renewable power and cut people's energy bills, and I've helped us take control of Kingston Council.

I am so grateful for the huge number of people who have backed my record of taking on the Tories, and my vision for a fairer, more caring and greener society.

I have received nearly [60% of nominations](#), I have been backed by the [majority of our Parliamentary party](#), 13 of our 16 former MEPs, and the majority of our Council Leaders across the country.

That support has given me huge inspiration to keep fighting for the things I believe in, and that I want our party to stand for.

As a young carer to my sick mother, I know that we don't do enough to build a more caring society, where we recognise the incredible work that the 10 million carers in our country do. [My plan for carers](#) would increase the carers allowance and give them more legal protections under the law so they can't be discriminated against at work.

Our party has always been at the forefront of fighting the climate emergency, and it's more vital that we continue that fight now. I called on all my training as an economist and my experience creating green jobs in Government to put together the most ambitious plan to tackle the climate emergency ever published. My [green revolution](#) calls for £150bn of investment in our green economy, in order to boost jobs, save our planet and help us rebuild after Covid.

The next leader will have a huge amount to do in order to get us fighting fit and in a place where we can win right across the country. I know I have the experience, judgement and vision to take our party forward, take on the Tories and help the Liberal Democrats fight for a more caring, greener and fairer society.

If you want to back my campaign then you support me here: [voteEd.uk](https://www.voteEd.uk)

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## [Lib Dems secure PM commitment to independent inquiry](#)

**Yesterday, Acting Liberal Democrat Leader Ed Davey secured a commitment from the Prime Minister to an independent inquiry into the Government's handling of the Covid-19 crisis and called for the timetable to be set out immediately.**

The UK has suffered one of the worst death rates in the world.

Speaking during Prime Minister's Questions yesterday, Ed Davey warned that under Boris Johnson's leadership the country has suffered one of the **worst death rates in the world and Europe's worst death rate of health and care workers.**

Making reference to Boris Johnson's support for an independent inquiry into the Iraq War, Ed Davey again urged the Prime Minister to commit in principle to a future independent inquiry.

In response, the Prime Minister accepted his Government will “learn the lessons of this pandemic” and **confirmed there will be an independent inquiry.**

Liberal Democrats were the first party leader to call for an independent inquiry, back on the 21st of April, and we have consistently made the case since.

Ed Davey has grilled the Prime Minister on the issue in the House of Commons, and Layla Moran is chairing the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus that is taking evidence on the Government response to the pandemic.

The Government must be held to account to ensure that the same mistakes are never repeated.

It is clear the Government has failed on so many fronts – failing to prepare properly for a pandemic, failing to protect care home residents and social care workers, and failing to properly communicate their plans and so much more.

With so many loved ones lost, people deserve to know what happened. After months of refusing the public that opportunity, we are pleased the Prime Minister has finally accepted Liberal Democrat demands for an independent inquiry.

**The Prime Minister must now set out the timetable of this inquiry,** and it must begin as soon as possible. The Government must be held to account to ensure that the same mistakes are never repeated.

The Liberal Democrats have been calling for an independent inquiry into the government’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic since April, to make sure we learn the lessons before a possible second wave. [@BorisJohnson](#) must now set out the timetable of this inquiry. <https://t.co/XEu7TVKIj6>

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [July 15, 2020](#)

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# Ending suspicion-less Stop and Search: your questions answered

## **What is Stop and Search?**

There are two main powers used by the police to stop and search people:

**'Reasonable grounds' Stop and Search:** under Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 ("PACE") and associated legislation (such as the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971), officers can stop and search someone if they have "reasonable grounds" to suspect that the person has "prohibited articles" (usually offensive weapons), stolen property or controlled drugs.

**'Suspicion-less' Stop and Search:** under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, a senior officer can authorise officers to stop and search people without suspicion in a particular area for a particular period of time. To authorise Section 60 Stop and Search, the senior officer must "reasonably believe" that one of the following conditions is met:

- serious violence may take place in that area and it is "expedient" to give authorisation to prevent it;
- serious violence has taken place, the weapon used is in that area, and it is "expedient" to give authorisation to find it; or
- people are carrying dangerous instruments or offensive weapons in that area.

The vast majority of Stop and Searches are the 'reasonable grounds' type, with 370,454 of them in 2018-19 according to the Home Office's latest figures.

However, there were also 13,175 suspicion-less Stop and Searches under Section 60 that year.

Lib Dems are fighting to end the disproportionate use of Stop and Search against BAME communities

## **How disproportionate is the use of Stop and Search?**

The latest Home Office figures (for 2018-19) show that there were 4 Stop & Searches for every 1,000 white people, compared to 38 for every 1,000 black people.

**That means a black person is 9.5 times as likely to be stopped and searched as a white person.**

The use of 'suspicion-less' Stop & Search specifically is even more disproportionate.

There were 4,858 searches of black people and 2,669 of white people under Section 60 in 2018-19. That means **a black person is 47 times more likely to be stopped and searched under Section 60 than a white person** (260 searches per 100,000 population for black people, compared to 5.5 per 100,000 population for white people).

### **Why is that a problem?**

As the Lammy Review concluded in 2017, “the disproportionate use of Stop and Search on BAME [black, Asian and minority ethnic] communities continues to drain trust in the criminal justice system as a whole.” Too many BAME communities feel over-policed and under-protected.

It also contributes to the over-representation of people from BAME throughout the criminal justice system. For example, black and mixed-race people make up 18% of the prison population, despite being less than 6% of the general population.

By undermining trust and confidence in the police among BAME communities, the disproportionate use of Stop and Search powers makes it harder for the police to gather the intelligence they need to identify weapon-carriers and base stops on accurate descriptions of suspects.

### **Does Stop and Search work?**

Disproportionate Stop and Search does not work to stop knife crime.

Stop and Search can be used effectively if it is focused on people who commit crime.

That requires the police to build trust and confidence through community policing, so they can gather the intelligence they need to identify weapon-carriers and base stops on accurate descriptions of suspects.

**That’s not the way Stop and Search is working right now.**

Most searches do not involve knives or other weapons at all: 60% are for drugs.

And very few actually result in knives being taken off the streets. Less than 2% of people searched under Section 60 are found to be carrying a weapon, and just 2% of all Stop and Searches result in the person being arrested for possession of an offensive weapon.

**Disproportionate Stop and Search simply does not work to stop knife crime.**

Boris Johnson proved this when he tried a massive expansion of suspicion-less Stop and Search in London when he was Mayor, called ‘Operation BLUNT 2’. In 2016, a damning Home Office analysis of the programme found that it had “no discernible crime-reducing effects”.

In 2017, the College of Policing published the first proper study of the link between Stop and Search and crime. It found that “extremely large increases in Stop and Search, of a scale likely to be unacceptable to some communities, would only deliver modest reductions in crime.” That study also reported that “No previous UK study has pointed to Stop and Search having any impact on crime.”

## **What is the Government doing about suspicion-less Stop and Search?**

Despite the evidence that suspicion-less expanding Stop and Search doesn't work, and that it disproportionately targets people from BAME communities, **the Conservative Government is massively expanding its use.**

The number of searches under Section 60 has increased from 631 in 2016-17 to 13,175 in 2018-19 – a 20-fold increase in just two years.

And last year the Government announced a number of changes to make it easier for the police to carry them out:

- Allowing inspectors to authorise a Section 60 (rather than only senior officers).
- Lowering the requirement that “the authorising officer must reasonably believe that an incident involving serious violence will take place” to reasonably believing that it “may take place”.
- Extending the initial period a Section 60 can be in force from 15 hours to 24, and extending the overall period an extension can be in place from 39 hours to 48.

## **What are the Liberal Democrats doing about suspicion-less Stop and Search?**

**We are fighting to end the disproportionate use of Stop and Search against BAME communities, including abolishing suspicion-less Stop and Search.**

At Prime Minister's Questions, our Acting Leader, Ed Davey, challenged Boris Johnson to “abolish suspicion-less stop-and-search powers and end the pain and injustice they wreak on so many people in Britain's black and minority communities.”

**Sadly, the Prime Minister refused, so Ed has tabled a Private Members' Bill – the Police Stop and Search (Repeal) Bill – to make it happen.**

The Liberal Democrats exist to fight for justice, liberty and equality. We are committed to reducing the over-representation of people from BAME backgrounds throughout the criminal justice system and combating racism – whether conscious or unconscious – wherever we find it.

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## [So you want to be leader? The Layla Moran Interview.](#)

This year we're holding a special Job Interview event for our two leadership candidates.

Catch up with Layla Moran's Job Interview Hustings above.

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