

News story: Home Secretary meets senior police officers to discuss violent crime

Chief Constables from 7 forces, which have seen the highest levels of serious violence, met alongside Sara Thornton Chair of NPCC, Director General of the NCA, Lynne Owens, and Met Commissioner Cressida Dick.

The Home Secretary praised the “incredible” work forces are doing in the fight against knife crime and the ongoing commitment of their officers. He also discussed the action the government is taking through the Serious Violence Strategy, an approach which was endorsed by senior officers.

The meeting also heard the short-term operational actions taken by forces at both a regional and national level and discussed the latest crime statistics. Officers also discussed the issues of police resourcing and the use of stop and search.

Home Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

I am deeply concerned by the rise in serious violence brought into focus by the murders in London and Manchester. We are working hard with police and other partners and agree that it requires action on many fronts.

I'm listening to the police officers and the purpose of this meeting was to discuss what more can be done.

But it's not just about law enforcement. It's a huge part, but it's also about early intervention and how we stop people turning to crime, that's about working across government and public bodies.

At the end of the meeting the attendees agreed to hold them more regularly.

The meeting builds on work of the Serious Violence Strategy which sets out the importance of a multi-agency approach to tackling serious violence and involves combining strong law enforcement with early intervention.

Building on this, in October last year the Home Secretary announced further measures including a new £200 million youth endowment fund, an independent review of drug misuse and a consultation on a new legal duty to underpin a multi-agency preventative or 'public health' approach to tackling serious violence.

In addition, in 2019 to 2020 total police funding will increase by up to £970 million including council tax precept – the biggest increase since 2010. This will enable the police to continue recruiting and fill crucial capability

gaps such as detectives.

At the last meeting on 28 November, the group discussed the challenges in tackling serious violence and provided insights on key issues being faced regionally.

Attendees:

- Home Secretary, Sajid Javid MP
- Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins MP
- Julia Kinniburgh, Director General, Serious and Organised Crime Group
- Dan Greaves, Crime Director, Home Office
- Nick Hunt, Head of Serious Violence Unit, Home Office
- Cressida Dick CBE, QPM, Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service
- Ade Adelekan, Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police Service.
- Andy Cooke QPM, Chief Constable, Merseyside Police
- David Thompson QPM, Chief Constable, West Midlands Police
- Rob Potts, Assistant Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police
- Jeremy Vaughan, Assistant Chief Constable, South Wales Police
- Tim Forber, Assistant Chief Constable, South Yorkshire Police
- John Robins, Temporary Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police
- Sara Thornton CBE, QPM, Chair of NPCC
- Martin Hewitt, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service (replacing Sara Thornton as Chair of NPCC in April 2019)
- Jacqueline Sebire, Assistant Chief Constable, Bedfordshire Police, Serious Violence NPCC Lead
- Lynne Owens, Director General, National Crime Agency
- Bernie O'Reilly, Deputy Chief Constable attending on behalf of Mike Cunningham, CEO College of Policing
- Mike Barton QPM, Chief Constable Durham Constabulary, NPCC Lead for Crime

[News story: HMCTS engage parliamentarians on reform programme](#)

MPs and lords were invited to hear about the latest developments from a range of court reform projects and services.

News story: HMCTS engage parliamentarians on reform programme

Members of Parliament and lords gathered today to discuss improvements to the justice system that HMCTS aims to deliver as part of its [reform programme](#).

HMCTS hosted the event to raise awareness and understanding of the programme amongst parliamentarians. Project leads presented service developments across the civil, family, tribunal and crime jurisdictions.

The event provided the opportunity for attendees to interact with the new online processes, from applying for a divorce to paying for probate.

Attendees also heard from Justice Minister Lucy Frazer QC MP and Susan Acland-Hood, CEO of HMCTS, who addressed the audience on the significance of the reform programme in relation to the future of the justice system.

Lucy Frazer Justice Minister said:

We're delighted to have this opportunity to showcase progress with the £1bn reform programme, which is led by the judiciary and the government.

With easy to follow online forms, complete with comprehensive, user-friendly guidance, the reform programme can make the pursuit of justice, previously an intimidating minefield, truly accessible to all.

Susan Acland-Hood, HMCTS CEO added:

For me, the absolute core principle behind HMCTS reform is that it is about making our system better for the people who use it.

We've got to design everything we do, not just by imagining what we think a user might want, but by asking them directly, by showing them demonstrations, by testing them and then by learning – not just from what people tell us – but from what they do when they start to work the systems.

Attendees were particularly interested to hear about changes to the HMCTS estate and the new single case-management system called the common platform, which will be accessible by the police, Crown Prosecution Service, HMCTS and legal professionals.

[Lucy Frazer's speaking](#)

[Susan Acland-Hood speaking](#)

So far, the court reform programme in England and Wales has:

- piloted fully-video hearings in the tax tribunals
- implemented a new national in-court system to record instantly the result of cases digitally
- piloted a new digital system sharing case information in criminal cases to the police, Crown Prosecution Service, courts and legal professionals
- launched a Civil Money Claims service with more than 51,000 claims made since it first launched in March 2018, with the fastest claim being lodged and paid under two hours. Almost 90% of users say they are satisfied or very satisfied with the new service
- launched an online Divorce Service, with more than 31,000 applications made since April 2018. The online form takes half as long to complete as the paper form, and has reduced the error rate
- launched an Online Probate Service with more than 12,000 personal applications made since July 2018
- opened two new Courts and Tribunals Service Centres in Stoke and Birmingham in January 2019, which are dealing with digital cases in the single justice service, divorce, social security and child support and some probate services
- provided support to help people use online services if they choose to

Press release: Foreign Secretary appoints Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism

William Shawcross will take on new role to bring greater focus to efforts to obtain redress from the Libyan government.

Press release: Foreign Secretary appoints Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA

terrorism

The Foreign Secretary has announced the appointment of William Shawcross as his Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism. This follows discussions with UK Parliamentarians about how best the UK Government can support and facilitate the efforts of victims to obtain redress from the Libyan government.

William Shawcross was previously Chair of the Charity Commission and has a broad range of experience, including in human rights and a distinguished record in journalism stretching back more than 40 years.

Former Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi supplied weapons, including Semtex explosives, to the IRA during the Troubles. The UK Government takes this issue extremely seriously and is committed to supporting the victims of Libyan-sponsored IRA terrorism. UK Ministers and diplomats in Libya continue to press the Libyan authorities to engage constructively with victims and their representatives.

More broadly the UK is actively engaged in efforts to support the UN-led political process in Libya, the objective of which is to facilitate agreement with Libyans on a more inclusive political settlement, which would be the best way of stabilising the country.

Middle East Minister Alistair Burt said:

It is excellent that William Shawcross has agreed to take on this important new role, which will help move us closer to resolving this pressing issue.

I am confident that William's appointment will bring greater focus to our efforts to support the victims of these terrible acts of terrorism.

As the Foreign Secretary's Special Representative on UK victims of Qadhafi-sponsored IRA terrorism, Mr Shawcross's role will be to help inform the government's approach to this issue. The precise terms of reference are being finalised, but among the issues Mr Shawcross will advise on is the amount of compensation that should be sought.

William Shawcross said:

I am honoured to be asked to undertake this hugely important challenge. The victims of the IRA terrorism sponsored by Qadhafi deserve all support for their efforts to obtain redress from the Libyan government.