



Home Office

Baroness Williams of Trafford
Minister of State

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Lord Rosser
House of Lords
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Dear Richard,

22 NOV 2016

Policing and Crime Bill: Firearms licensing

During the debate in Committee on 9 November, I undertook to write to you regarding the introduction of the police's online system for handling applications for civilian firearm and shotgun certificates (Hansard, column 1165). You asked when it will be introduced, whether it will result in the police recovering the full costs of their role in administering applications, and whether we will increase fees in the interim.

As you are aware, the fees were set at a level that would enable the police to recover the cost of firearms licensing once an online system is in place. The programme of work for a new firearm and shotgun licensing system is being managed by the Police ICT Company in conjunction with the police service to provide a cost-effective and more consistent licensing system. While the project is being led by the police, the Government is supporting the work to develop online licensing and provided funding earlier this year to produce an outline programme plan including key deliverables and a cost estimate. The proposals will be reviewed by the end of the year.

With regard to the interim period, we are planning to commence a review in the New Year, which will consider the level of the fees and the progress of the implementation of online licensing. In addition, we will be reviewing the current firearms licensing IT system to ensure that it continues to meet policing's operational demands until the new system is delivered. We will also be determining if it is possible to deliver some improvements that will be of benefit to the police in the interim.

I will keep you updated as this work progresses.

I am copying this letter to Lord Paddick, Baroness Hamwee, Lord Attlee and Lord Harris of Haringey and placing a copy in the library of the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan', written in a cursive style.

BARONESS WILLIAMS OF TRAFFORD