



Ministry
of Justice



Home Office

The Right Honourable
Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of State for Crime,
Policing and Probation

Dame Diana Johnson MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

16 March 2022

Dear Dame Diana,

POLICE, CRIME, SENTENCING AND COURTS BILL: SEX FOR RENT

During the debate on the Lords amendments to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, I undertook to write to you about the scope of our planned consultation on the issue of so called “sex for rent” (Official Report, 28 February 2022, column 761/762).

The consultation will help the Government to better understand the scale and the nature of sex for rent as well as the appropriateness of the existing offences in this area.

The scope of the consultation will reflect the subject matter of the two Lords amendments, namely the exchange of accommodation for sexual relations and the activities that arrange or facilitate that exchange.

As you will know from previous exchanges of correspondence, the Government is committed to tackling the harm and exploitation that can be associated with prostitution and believes that people who want to leave prostitution should be given every opportunity to find a route out. We are also aware that there are different approaches to prostitution around the world. We have yet to see unequivocal evidence that any one approach is better at tackling harm and exploitation – and that remains our priority.

Given that Parliament has expressed a specific concern about the issue of so-called “sex-for-rent” and not wider sex work and prostitution policy, the consultation will be focused on that specific issue.

We recognise the importance of ensuring the law is robust and can tackle behaviour such as this. It is important that any new offence or further non-criminal measures are informed by proper consultation including with operational partners and stakeholders outside of Government. The consultation will enable us to further understand how the current legislation works in practice, the case for a bespoke offence or offences and where further measures may be beneficial.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP