

Scottish Sentencing Council submission of 17 March 2022

PE1887/H - Create an Unborn Victims of Violence Act

Thank you for your letter dated 17 February 2022 drawing the Scottish Sentencing Council's attention both to the [petitioner's correspondence](#) in respect of the above petition and [other written submissions](#) received by the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee to date. I am responding on behalf of the Council.

The Council has noted the issues raised by the petitioner and in the various submissions received by the Committee to date. It will give detailed consideration to these in the course of its work on the development of a sentencing guideline on domestic abuse offences.

As was noted in the Council's submission to the Committee dated 03 December 2021, it has recently established a Domestic Abuse Committee to oversee the development of a draft guideline. This committee is due to meet in the near future to consider a programme for engaging with organisations and individuals with an interest or expertise in domestic abuse issues to get their views on what the guideline should cover. In line with the Council's [methodology for guideline development](#), it will also identify what research may be needed and what evidence might be gathered to inform the development of a draft guideline.

Once the committee is satisfied with the draft guideline, it will hold a public consultation by publishing on its website a consultation paper, along with the draft guideline and a draft assessment of the guideline's likely impact on the criminal justice system.

The Council is keen to hear from all those who want to comment on its guidelines and would very much welcome a response to the consultation from the petitioner in due course.

The petitioner, and others interested in the Council's work in this area, can follow progress on the development of the guideline at the [Council's website](#). The Council will publish a news item about any significant

activity it undertakes in this area, including about the publication of any research reports and details of any public engagement events, as well as the eventual public consultation itself.

The Council also regularly provides updates on its work, and related activities by other organisations and individuals, on its Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/ScotSentencing>.

The Council's secretariat is very happy to discuss the Council's work on domestic abuse, and its work more generally, and can be contacted by email at sentencingcouncil@scotcourts.gov.uk.

I hope that this is helpful.