



REVIEW OF LAW, POLICY AND PROCEDURE RELATING TO PAROLE DECISIONS

This review will consider the case for changes in law, policy and procedure in relation to Parole Board decision-making. It will include an examination of the transparency of the process and reasons for parole decisions, and how victims are appropriately engaged in that process. It will take account of the interests of justice, public confidence in the system and the impact on victims. The review will draw on the views and experience of victims, practitioners and international best practice.

The review will focus on the following areas:

1. The law, policy, guidance and practice relating to challenges to Parole Board decision-making, specifically whether there should be a mechanism to allow parole decisions to be reconsidered.
2. The transparency of Parole Board decision making, including:
 - whether the outcomes of Parole Board decisions should be published or otherwise disclosed;
 - whether the reasons for those decisions should be published, and if so to what extent; and
 - whether there are any other changes that should be made in order to contribute to greater transparency.
3. Victim involvement in Parole Board hearings:
 - to review the relevant entitlements outlined in the Victims' Code to determine whether improvements should be made to how victims are currently involved in and contribute to Parole Board hearings;
 - what improvements should be made to how their involvement is facilitated.
4. Arrangements for communicating with victims:
 - to review whether the current entitlements for victims who qualify under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 for the Victim Contact Scheme are adequate, including in relation to Victim Personal Statements and licence conditions;
 - to review whether improvements can be made to the way that the scheme operates in practice, in particular the process by which victims are notified of their entitlements and of decisions; whilst respecting the victim's preference for how they are contacted;
 - to consider the question of ongoing contact with victims who are eligible for the Victim Contact Scheme but have previously opted out; and
 - whether there need to be new entitlements or procedures for victims not covered by the statutory scheme.