

# Proposed Whole Life Custody (Scotland) Bill

## Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to give Scottish courts the power to sentence the worst criminals to custody for the rest of their lives. The consultation runs from 29 May 2019 to 30 August 2019. All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document. Questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require an answer. All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response. Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded. Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here: [Consultation document](#) [Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used

## About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

*No Response*

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Ashleigh Watson

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

## Aim and approach

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of giving Scottish courts the power to sentence the worst criminals to custody for the rest of their lives?

Fully supportive

Q2. How would introducing Whole Life Custody Sentences affect your level of confidence in the Scottish justice system?

Significantly more confident in the justice system

Q3. Which types of murder should have a Whole Life Custody Sentence as the starting point for sentencing? (Choose all that apply)

The murder of two or more persons, where each murder involves any of (1) a substantial degree of premeditation or planning, (2) the abduction of the victim, or (3) sexual or sadistic conduct

The murder of a child if involving the abduction of the child or sexual or sadistic motivation

The murder of a police or prison officer in the course of their duty

A murder carried out for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause

A murder by an offender previously convicted of murder

Other (please specify)

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

Murder of any member of the public with the intent to kill

Q4. Which sexual offences should have a Whole Life Custody Sentence as the starting point for sentencing? (Choose all that apply)

Rape of two or more persons

Rape of a young child

Sexual assault on a young child by penetration

Causing a young child to participate in a sexual activity

**Please explain the reasons for this response.**

They can not be rehabilitated we need a stronger stance against the growing problem of child sex abuse in all its forms and to send a clear message it will not be tolerated at any level no matter who they are or who their victims are.

Q5. Are there any other types of offence (other than murder or certain sexual offences) which should attract a Whole Life Custody Sentence as a 'starting point' for sentencing?

Yes (please specify)

**Please explain the reason for your response.**

Fraudulently benefitting from the loss of others For example - someone who can fraudulently claim they were a victim of an accident e.g. [redacted] Gang related crimes if someone is found to be a ring leader of a gang and is not carrying out crimes themselves but forcing others to do so on their behalf and enabling the distribution of drugs, knives and guns should be in prison. They have no moral fibre to comprehend the effects of their actions on society and cannot be rehabilitated.

Q6. Which of the following best expresses your view on whether whole life custody should be a sentencing option for younger offenders?

Whole life custody should be an option for any adult offender (aged 16 or over) or for children over the age of criminal responsibility (at the time the offence was committed)

## Financial Implications

Q7. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have? Please explain the reasons for your response.

It will cost us more to have them in prison for the rest of their lives initially but I would hope that as a result of these sentences being passed eventually this will lead to a drop in crime. It will hopefully serve as a deterrent and therefore hopefully lessen the pressure on our emergency services which hopefully in turn will save money in areas.

## Equalities

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

## Sustainability

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

This bill needs to happen so that socially, economically and environmentally the country is better off without the costs of housing and hiding registered sex offenders, chasing a repeat gang leader and costing police time and money and to stop the fear culture that is building in our society with regards to whether our police can actually help us and if they do catch the criminal will they even be punished? Too many times we let people who should be behind bars go because we base the decision on money. The cost of crime and fatality and drugs abuse is far greater than that of a prisoner.

## General

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

We need to enforce sentences to encourage victims of all crimes to come forward and feel that their voices are truly heard. Only 4% of rape allegations ever lead to sentencing this has to change This should be 94%. We're letting victims down and rewarding the perpetrators