



Department of

Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

www.justice-ni.gov.uk

**FROM THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
RICHARD PENGELLY CB**

Rm B5.10, Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST BT4 3SG
Tel: 028 9052 2992
email: richard.pengelly@justice-ni.gov.uk

Henry Downey
Democratic Services Officer
Belfast City Council
Via e-mail downeyh@belfastcity.gov.uk

Your Ref: HD.SP and R 26.6.23
Our Ref: TOF-0386-2023
30 August 2023

Dear Mr Downey

REVIEW OF HATE CRIME

Thank you for your e-mail of 3 August 2023 seeking an update on the Independent Review of Hate Crime Legislation by Judge Marrinan.

Following the publication of Judge Marrinan's Independent Review of Hate Crime Legislation Report (December 2020), the Department of Justice has been progressing work to implement recommendations aimed at improving the criminal justice system response to addressing hate crime and providing redress to victims.

Where relevant, a number of recommendations from the Review will be implemented through the provision of a Hate Crime Bill. Work on policy development and public consultation, in preparation for a Bill, is ongoing. This work in the legislative sphere will complement and strengthen non-legislative work also being taken forward to address hate crime, including by working collaboratively with partners in relation to tackling the enabling factors of hate crime such as intolerance, prejudice and hate.

In response to the complexity of some issues and desire to advance public engagement in the Department's consultation process, it was agreed to approach the public consultation on hate crime legislation in two phases. The first of two planned public consultations is now complete and a summary report on the consultation findings and (then) Ministerial approved way forward was published in March 2023 - [Phase one summary of responses hate crime review legislation Department of Justice \(justice-ni.gov.uk\)](#).



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

www.justice-ni.gov.uk

Work on developing policies to be included in the phase two public consultation has now commenced with the intention of publishing a public consultation on these issues in 2024, subject to the return of Ministers. The remaining policy aspects relate to consideration of three strategic themes:

- adding age and sex/ gender/ variations in sex characteristics as protected characteristics within hate crime legislation (recommendations 9-11);
- a range of issues relating to stirring up offences (recommendation 14); and
- a statutory duty for named public authorities to remove hate expressions from their buildings and public spaces where they carry out their functions (recommendation 15).

Whilst it remains the intention to introduce a Hate Crime Bill in the current 2022-2027 mandate, the timing will be subject to any impact on the Department's wider legislation programme due to delays in the formation of an Executive. An incoming Minister will wish to review the current programme, taking account of the time available for delivery.

I hope this information provided is of assistance to you going forward.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD PENGELLY CB