



Subject:	Correspondence received from Minister of Justice - Standalone Hate Crime Bill
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Co-ordinator

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To note the correspondence received from the Minister of Justice in relation to the need for a standalone Hate Crime Bill.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report.
3.0	Main report
	Key Issues
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at its meeting on 21st November, the Members of the Committee were provided with an update on the results of a formal public consultation on draft byelaws for the city centre and further engagement.
3.2	During discussion, the Committee agreed that, to deal with some of the obstructive, threatening and abusive behaviour in the city centre, it write to the Justice Minister to outline the need for a standalone Hate Crime Bill and highlight the requirement for an additional class of offenses, noting that the change model in sentencing did not go far enough.
3.3	Subsequently, Democratic Services wrote to the Minister for Justice and a response has been received at Appendix 1.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Response from the Justice Minister.