

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

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**FROM: NAOMI LONG MLA
MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

DATE: 16 NOVEMBER 2020

TO: COLM GILDERNEW MLA

**CORRECTION OF COMMENTS ON ABUSE OF TRUST DURING ORAL QUESTIONS
ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2020.**

Dear Colm,

During Oral Assembly Questions on 7 September, you asked whether I intended to extend abuse of trust laws to include any adult who holds a position of trust, power or authority over 16 or 17 year olds.

In my response, I mistakenly advised that abuse of trust legislation was the responsibility of the Department of Health. This issue is the responsibility of Department of Justice. Extension of abuse of trust offences was considered in the consultation on the Review of the Law on Child Sexual Exploitation. Currently, these offences apply only where the position of trust is in the context of a statutory responsibility such as education, state care or criminal justice. However, the vast majority of respondents were in favour of widening the scope of the offences to include sports coaches and other groups of people who work with children and young people such as church groups and youth groups.

In response, the Department has committed to carrying out further exploratory work with criminal justice partners and key stakeholders on the detail of an expanded definition of positions of trust in order to consider future legislative provision to address this matter.



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This letter will be copied to the Speaker's Office and the Assembly Library.

Best regards,



Naomi Long

**NAOMI LONG MLA
MINISTER OF JUSTICE**