

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

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Mervyn Storey MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Justice
Room 242
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13 January 2022

Dear Mervyn,

Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Bill – PSNI Resources

Thank you for your letter of 17 December requesting information on funding bids and allocations that have been made in the context of the 2022-25 Budget for additional funding to meet PSNI capacity requirements to ensure the effective implementation of the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Bill.

All of the business areas of the Department with policy content in the Bill have worked closely with the PSNI and other justice partners during the development of their respective provisions.

In terms of funding for the 2022-25 period, a number of financial exercises have been commissioned from the Department to the PSNI to inform the Budget 2022-25 process.

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A twelve-week consultation on proposed draft resource and capital allocations commenced on 13 December 2021, as part of the Budget 2022-25 process.

Once draft and final budgets are agreed by the Executive and approved by the

Assembly, a formal statement of the annual budget allocated by the DoJ for the budget period will be sent to the PSNI.

Decisions on the prioritisation of resources allocated to the PSNI are ultimately an operational matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board for the deployment of resources made available to him by the Department.

Where pressures arise, these can be considered through the normal budgetary processes. To date, PSNI has not made a bid for additional resources in respect of any of the Bills that have been developed and brought forward during this mandate.

The Department will continue to work closely with the police and others to oversee the implementation of the Bill provisions, once it completes its Assembly passage and is granted Royal Assent.

This oversight role will include ongoing cost and benefit analysis, and it is open to PSNI to develop proportionate business cases to request additional funding, where new legislative provisions create wholly new and unavoidable additional resource requirements that cannot be met through the normal budgetary processes.

I trust that the Committee will find this helpful.

NAOMI LONG MLA MINISTER OF JUSTICE