

**From the Permanent Secretary and HSC
Chief Executive**



Committee for Justice
The Committee Clerk,
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Byemail: protectionfromstalkingbill@niassembly.gov.uk

Date: 5 March 2021

Dear Ms Darrah

PROTECTION FROM STALKING BILL

Thank you for your letter of 19 February welcoming views on the Protection from Stalking Bill.

I am conscious that much of the content of this Bill has a justice focus which would not fall within the Department of Health's remit. However, I am mindful of the link between stalking and domestic abuse.

As you may already be aware, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice jointly lead on the delivery of the *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy*. The passage of this Bill and indeed the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Bill, is therefore a welcome step forward in providing victims and survivors with greater protections. Both pieces of legislation will help to clarify the law in this area and importantly, give victims the courage to come forward and report concerns to the police.

I wish the Committee well in its scrutiny of the Bill.

Yours sincerely

RICHARD PENGELLY ACCOUNTING OFFICER