



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnstrie O tha Laa

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18th August 2023

REFERENCE: FOI\23\54 - Freedom of Information Request – Gillen Review Media Recommendations

Dear Madam,

Thank you for your request for information dated 23 July 2023 and detailed below.

I am writing to request an update on the progress of the media related recommendations outlined in the Gillen Review.

The Review recommended a voluntary protocol for the media on reporting of sexual offences be developed. To the Department's knowledge, has this been set up?

Has the Media and Justice Protocol between the Media, PSNI, NICTS, the Office of the Lord Chief Justice and PPS been expanded to include reporting of serious sexual offences?

The Review advocated for measures to counteract rape myths and stereotypes including a media campaign. Has a media campaign been planned/ implemented?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access when you write to us asking for information. You have the right to know whether we hold recorded information in scope of your request, and you have the right to have that recorded information given to you. These rights may only be overridden if the information you are looking for is covered by an exemption in the Act.

Please be advised that I can provide a response to your request as follows:



In relation to the first aspect of your request, you will be aware that Gillen Review recommendation number 18 states that “*The press and media should be party to a voluntary protocol governing how serious sexual offences are reported*”.

I can advise that a written protocol between media representatives, the PSNI, the NI Courts & Tribunals Service, Lady Chief Justice’s Office and the PPS that includes information and guidance relating to the reporting of sexual offences has been drafted, but the final version has not yet been agreed. Work remains ongoing in relation to this recommendation.

In relation to the second aspect of your enquiry, the Department of Justice continues to lead multi-agency work to increase public awareness of serious sexual offences and to challenge rape myths.

During spring 2020, the Department led an awareness campaign relating to sexual consent focusing on the tagline “*without consent it is sexual crime*”. The campaign included TV advertising, outdoor billboards and social media reporting. It also complemented existing PSNI initiatives such as ‘No Grey Zone’, reflecting the language used in that campaign.

The DoJ also funded the ‘Consent is Tea’ animation which was linked to the campaign and was widely promoted through the Department’s various social media channels. The Department continues to publish material via social media aimed at raising public awareness of issues such as consent and rape myths.

In late 2021, the Department conducted a public survey aimed at identifying the rape myths most prevalent in society and over 2,400 responses were received. The results, along with a series of workshops to gather the views of children and of people with learning disabilities, are informing the development of phased strategic communications to challenge the most commonly held rape myths.

As part of this, DOJ supported the PSNI with its “[*You will be supported*](#)” campaign. While the campaign is particularly aimed at marginalised communities who were involved and consulted in its creation, it includes information for the whole community on subjects such as consent, myths around sexual offences, the importance of reporting sexual crime and where help and support can be found.



The Department is currently working in partnership with the PSNI and The Executive Office, to develop strategic communications aimed at tackling gender based violence with a view to launching initial communications within this financial year.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information, you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request an internal review please do so in writing stating the reasons to the address above.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask the Commissioner to investigate whether the DOJ has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out.

Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

