



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

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**FROM THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
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Henry Downey
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City Hall
Belfast
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Your Ref: HD. SP and R 23.09.2022

3 November 2022

Dear Henry

COUNCIL'S ALLEYGATING PROGRAMME

Thank you for your correspondence of 20 October 2022. I appreciate the important work of the Council and the significant investment it is making in phase five of the alleygating programme. I note the request of elected members that the Council write to the Department of Justice (DoJ) requesting matched funding for the initiative.

Unfortunately, given the ongoing priorities within the remit of the Department and extraordinary constraints on our budget, the DoJ is not, at this time, in a position to provide funding for the alleygating programme. The DoJ has used its powers in the past to assist Council when alleygates have been sought by residents to prevent access due to anti-social behaviour (ASB), but usually this is limited to interface areas and precedes adoption of the gates by Council. On a small number of occasions we have agreed to fund such measures, albeit this has usually been on the recommendation of policing colleagues for express and pressing community protection needs.

The Department fully recognises the negative impact that ASB can have on communities, and is currently leading on a review of ASB legislation to ensure that the relevant authorities, such as councils, have effective and proportionate enforcement powers in place to tackle the issue.



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In partnership with the Northern Ireland Policing Board, the Department provides annual funding of £826,516 to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) who lead on the Department's response to community safety issues at a local level. That funding is utilised by the PCSPs across Belfast's districts to fund a range of projects and initiatives to address ASB, including supporting the important work being conducted via the Holyland Intervention Project.

In concluding, the Department is not in a position to providing funding on this occasion, however, I wish you every success with the Programme.

Yours sincerely

RICHARD PENGELLY CB