

CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

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Northern Ireland
Assembly

Monday 22 February 2016

Justice: Cross Border Criminality

Summary: Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Justice what steps he is taking to combat cross-border criminality.

Mr Ford: The fight against cross-border criminality is principally an operational matter for the two police forces and other law enforcement agencies, coordinated through the new cross-jurisdictional joint agency task force. The terms of reference for the task force were agreed at a ministerial trilateral meeting held in Dublin on 21 December. A strategic oversight group will be jointly chaired by the deputy commissioner for operations of an Garda Síochána and the PSNI assistant chief constable for crime operations. Other members will be senior representatives of other relevant law enforcement agencies. The joint chairs have already met twice, and the first full task force meeting will be in early March. An operations coordination group will be chaired by chief superintendents from the PSNI and an Garda Síochána. Membership will comprise senior operational representatives from a wider group of relevant law enforcement agencies to be decided by the group.

Source: <http://data.niassembly.gov.uk/HansardXml/plenary-22-02-2016.pdf>

Justice: Cross Border Cooperation

Summary: T1. Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with his counterpart in Dublin to address the policy and legislative concerns raised by the Chief Constable of the PSNI following the welcome before Christmas that he and the Garda Commissioner gave to the idea of closer crossborder cooperation.

Mr Ford I thank Mr Rogers for that question. I frequently discuss with the Irish Justice Minister— I think probably at every meeting I have with her — the issues of operational support for the two police services. I know that there had been discussions ongoing very recently between officials about the refresh to the cross-border policing strategy, which I hope to be able to launch within the next few weeks, subject to timing arrangements at this stage largely because of the elections to Dáil

Éireann. I believe that good work has been done on that, but it is important that we get the public statement of the relaunch of that strategy.

Source: <http://data.niassembly.gov.uk/HansardXml/plenary-22-02-2016.pdf>

Brexit: DRD Funding

Summary: Ms Hanna asked the Minister for Regional Development, now that the date for the EU referendum has been confirmed, to outline any planning or auditing that her Department has done to assess the funding that might be lost if we are withdrawn from the European Union in the summer.

Miss M McIlveen: I thank the Member for her question. As she will be aware, the date was agreed only at the weekend, and, given that it is only Monday, I am not yet at the stage of getting that information, but I plan to do so in the near future.

Ms Hanna: Has her Department applied for money in INTERREG's latest open call, which is worth a potential £30 million to Northern Ireland for cross-border transport? Are there any specific cross-border transport projects that she feels might be at risk in the event of a Brexit?

Miss M McIlveen: My Department is undertaking a number of projects on sourcing EU funding, and I mentioned the greenways. One that has a cross-border dimension is the Londonderry transport hub. I will speak to officials and get the detail of the information that the Member has requested and send it to her.

Source: <http://data.niassembly.gov.uk/HansardXml/plenary-22-02-2016.pdf>



The Houses of the Oireachtas are in their Election Recess at this time.