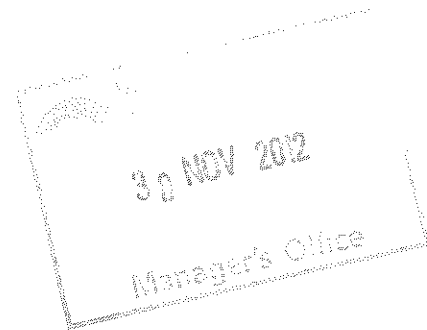




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OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

Ms. Emer O'Gorman
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services Department
South Dublin County Council
County Hall
Town Centre
Tallaght
Dublin 24.



Your reference M13/1012

Dear Ms. O'Gorman

On behalf of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr. Alan Shatter T.D., I refer further to your correspondence regarding South Dublin County Council's recent Motion concerning funding for Community Safety Fora.

In this regard, the Minister has directed me to advise you of the following.

Having made enquiries in the matter, it is understood that the projects, to which the Motion refers, are among a number of Clondalkin Local Drug Task Force originated projects which were, in effect, transferred into the mainstreaming programmes of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government during the period 2001-2002. Since that time funding for their operation has been provided by that Department.

It is understood that the projects in question have been advised by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government that, as a result of significant cuts in the funding available to that Department's housing programme budget, it will no longer be in a position to continue to fund these projects post 2012.

As you will appreciate, given their origin and operation to date, the provision of funding to these projects is, therefore, primarily a matter in the first instance for the Minister's colleagues, Minister Hogan and Minister of State White.

The Minister understands that the issues involved have already been the subject of discussions and correspondence in the context of the National Drugs Strategy 2009-2016, and that a number of meetings have already taken place involving the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and other identified funding agencies concerning the withdrawal of funding to a number of the projects

being affected.

While the withdrawal of long-standing funding for the community safety fora in Clondalkin is regretted given the well regarded contribution they make at local level, the Minister understands that Minister Hogan has indicated that this course of action has been necessitated by difficult decisions having to be taken in prioritising funding for services in all programme areas for 2012.

As you will appreciate, these decisions are set against the background of the extremely challenging national economic circumstances which currently exist and the financial environment in which the 2012 estimates process had to be undertaken.

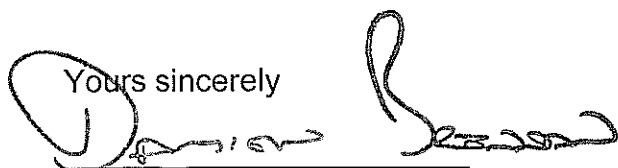
The Minister does appreciate that the community safety fora to which the Motion refers include within their remit a role in supporting the overall development of local policing fora. However, as the Council may already be aware, there is no dedicated funding programme for the provision of resources to support local policing fora projects.

In some cases a number of such fora have been able to avail of existing funding support either through the National Drugs Strategy/Local Drug Task Force initiative or through local authority programmes or, alternatively, they have secured funds through other local programmes. In other areas local policing fora function without any dedicated budget.

The Minister therefore wishes to advise that while this Department has been centrally involved in partnership with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, An Garda Síochána and with the Community Sector in the development of the overall Joint Policing Committees Programme and the related Local Policing Fora initiative, it has no budget provision available to fund local policing fora and the Ministerial guidelines governing their operation reflect this position.

The Minister regrets, therefore, that he is not in a position to provide financial support to the projects in question.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damien Brennan', written over a horizontal line.

Damien Brennan
Private Secretary

29 November 2012