

29th January 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re Department for Communities Equality Impact Assessment Draft DfC Budget 2021-2022

I am writing to express the deep shock and concern felt across the independent advice network about this proposed £1.5m reduction in funding to the independent advice sector. First and foremost, our main concern is for the thousands of vulnerable people who will suffer as a result. The Welfare Reform Support Project deals with some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people and last year dealt with 126,616 enquires both via the Helpline and via local advice services which included:

- Providing benefit entitlement checks and income maximisation for clients
- Identifying, prioritising and explaining to clients their options
- Providing evidence-based support to decision making
- Providing quality-assured, jargon-free advice and support
- Facilitating form completion on behalf of vulnerable clients
- Advocating on behalf of our clients
- Providing relevant onward referrals (including crisis intervention)
- Providing a holistic approach to clients' needs
- Positively impacting clients and their families' overall health and financial well-being

This proposed cut will mean 45 job losses in the independent advice network – these are skilled trained and experienced advisers with the knowledge to deliver successful client outcomes.

The independent advice network is already working at maximum capacity and has stepped up to the plate to help DfC with its Covid19 response, including running the Covid19 Community Helpline and local frontline providers are working closely with Councils and local representatives to support those most in need. Advisers have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic and are already exhausted and stressed out and now feel like they have been completely devalued; especially as there was no prior consultation and they had to learn about this proposal from an EQIA released late Wednesday afternoon (27th January) by DfC.

It is the clear view of Advice NI that the proposal not to prioritise this funding is very short-sighted and will undoubtedly differentially impact on the most vulnerable at a time when they need all the independent advice they can get. Indeed the EQIA itself states that advisers “help and support some of the most vulnerable in our society, including young people, older people and people with disabilities. Lack of funding for the advice sector is also likely to impact on a number of Section 75 categories.”

And in terms of the year ahead, the demand is likely to increase further:

- Increased job loss (The number of people on the NI claimant count was 58,400 in December 2020, almost double the number recorded in March 2020);
- Furlough ending at the end of April 2021 (98,499 on furlough in NI in December 2020);
- Increase in Universal Credit applications (114,000 households on Universal Credit in August 2020);
- Future migration of benefit claimants on to Universal Credit & Planned cuts to the UC £20 per week 'Covid19 uplift';
- Social security benefit appeals (5,958 PIP appeals pending);

All in all, we believe this proposal to cut independent advice funding must be reversed.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss these concerns and would ask for your support in terms of responding to this consultation in the strongest possible terms,

Best regards,



Bob Stronge
(Chief Executive, Advice NI)



Mr Danny Kinahan, NI Veterans Commissioner

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

E: commissioner@nivco.co.uk W: www.nivco.co.uk

29 January 2021

Dear fellow Veteran,

It is a huge honour to have been appointed as Northern Ireland's first Veterans Commissioner and to have the opportunity to represent and advocate on behalf of you all. With your help, I want to ensure that those who have given so much in the service of their country receive the support, help and assistance they rightly deserve.

Since my appointment, I have travelled throughout Northern Ireland listening to veterans and hearing first-hand their experiences during military service and also how they have found the transition back to civilian life.

I am acutely aware that many of you have left the armed services and are perfectly content with your lives as civilians and do not require help. However, there are many of you who require help and support across a range of issues, including **health**, **housing**, **retraining**, and **educational** needs for your families.

As Veterans Commissioner I need to engage with as many of you as I can in order that you can receive the help you require and know how to access that help in an efficient and timely manner. You can contact my office or keep up to date with my work in the following ways:

- Telephone - 028 90527734
- Email - commissioner@nivco.co.uk
- Website - www.nivco.co.uk and
- Twitter - [@niveteranscomm](https://twitter.com/niveteranscomm)

Going forward, it is absolutely critical that we firmly establish in Northern Ireland all that is promised in the **Armed Forces Covenant** and I warmly welcome the recent

introduction of the Armed Forces Bill that will enhance support for service personnel, veterans and their families.

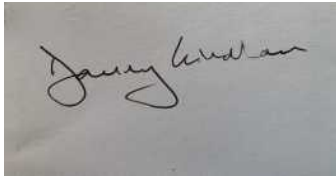
I would like to thank the various charities, regimental associations and community groups who are assisting in getting this letter out to as many of you as possible. My team works closely with all service providers and with the RFCA's Veterans' Support Office (VSO), the statutory body that provides oversight of the delivery of veterans' services across NI.

In these difficult times, particularly given the impact that COVID-19 has had on us all, can I ask that you contact your former military colleagues and make sure they are doing okay? If you have any concerns about any of them, or need help yourself, please make contact with my office or with the team in the VSO - contact details can be found at www.nivso.org.uk.

My role is part-time and is initially for three years. However, my team, which is now complete, is made up of two full-time members of staff, and we are here to help you as best we can.

I relish the task I have been given and will do everything I can to be a strong voice for every veteran in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

A photograph of a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Danny Kinahan'.

Danny Kinahan
NI Veterans Commissioner



ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE
 50 Stiles Way Antrim BT41 2UB
 T 028 9446 3113 F 028 9448 1324

MOSSLEY MILL
 Carnmoney Road North Newtownabbey BT36 5QA
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E info@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk
www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk
 @ANBorough

1 February 2021

Mr Edwin Poots MLA
 Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
 Dundonald House
 Upper Newtownards Road
 Ballymiscaw
 Belfast BT4 3SB

Dear Minister Poots

At a meeting of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council on 25 January 2021, a Motion was presented to Members regarding animal cruelty. The Motion was declared unanimously carried and reads as follows:

"This Council condemns animal cruelty in all its forms and acknowledges the work of numerous animal welfare organisations and of local councils, including ours, in tackling cruelty towards animals.

This Council notes that there is currently no register of those convicted of offences against animals and there is no public register of licensed dog breeders, allowing unlicensed puppy farms to proliferate.

This Council therefore resolves to write to the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to ask for the introduction of:

(a) a Register of Banned Animal Welfare Offenders for those convicted of animal cruelty; and,

(b) a publicly accessible list of licensed dog breeders.

Finally, Council resolves to copy in each of the other ten councils to these requests."

I trust you will consider this request at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jacqui Dixon'.

Jacqui Dixon, BSc MBA
Chief Executive

cc Chief Executives of NI Councils

From: DfE Private Office <Private.Office@economy-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 02 February 2021 21:35
To: Eileen Forde <Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org>
Cc: DfE Private Office <Private.Office@economy-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: INV-0090-2021. From the Office of the Minister for the Economy.

Dear Ms Forde,

Thank you for Mr Mallaghan's letter requesting that the Minister receive a delegation from Mid-Ulster District Council in order to discuss the Department's recovery strategy for town centre businesses.

The Minister's Private Office will endeavour to get back to you with the Minister's response as soon as possible.

Please note your unique reference code, which appears in the subject line of this email.

This email does not require a response.

Yours sincerely,

Sean

Sean Cummings
Minister's Private Office
Department for the Economy
Netherleigh House
Massey Avenue
Belfast BT4 2JP
Tel: 02890 529 427 (ext: 29427)
TextRelay: 18001 02890 529 427
Web: www.economy-ni.gov.uk

Office of the Local Government
Boundaries Commissioner
info@lgbc-ni.org.uk

By email:

3 February 2021

Local Government Boundaries Review in Northern Ireland

Dear Sir/Madam,

Today I am writing to inform you that in my role as Local Government Boundaries Commissioner I have taken the first statutory step in my review of the 11 district council areas in Northern Ireland. The statutory basis for my appointment, the procedure that applies to the Review and my recommendations is the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.

The independence of this review is paramount and its scope is to review the boundaries and names of the 11 local government districts, which are specified in the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, and number, boundaries and names of the wards into which each district is divided.

The Review is facilitated by a tripartite agreement between my office, the Electoral Office NI, and Ordnance Survey NI, a division of Land & Property Services in the Department of Finance. By June 2021 I plan to publish provisional recommendations and hold a public consultation.

I now invite proposals from councils, political parties, associations, organisations and individual members of the public in relation to the boundary and name of the 11 districts: and the number, boundaries and names of the wards within the 11 districts.

If you would like to submit a proposal or discuss any aspect of this please contact
Info@lgbc-ni.org.uk

More information about the Review will be accessed through the website available at:
www.lgbc-ni.org.uk

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Havlin

Local Government Boundaries Commissioner

cc Jenny McGuigan, LGBC Office.



Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

Quality Care - for you, with you

Chair
Eileen Mullan

Chief Executive
Shane Devlin

Our ref: SD/jmck/ew
Your ref: C003/21

8 February 2021

BY EMAIL: Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Chair
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

Dear Cllr Mallaghan

Thank you for your correspondence dated 3 February 2021. You will be aware that the geographical area primarily served by the Southern Trust has experienced high levels of community transmission over the last few months. This directly correlates to high levels of pressure across all areas of health and social care. In the Mid-Ulster area particularly, the current 7 day rate of infections is the highest in NI (at 07/02/21). ABC and NMD Councils sit alongside Mid Ulster as the top three highest levels of community transmission in NI.

Our hospital activity in Surge 3, compared to Surge 1 is almost four times higher – which has put increased and sustained pressure on our hospital system and has required us to consolidate staff into areas of high demand to manage the high numbers of patients who are COVID-19 positive.

This has the inevitable consequence of limiting our capacity to provide usual levels of service. We are also managing high levels of staff absence related to COVID-19, which impacts on our ability to sustain services.

In response to the specific issues raised in your letter:

1. Appointments for Clinics

We are working to continue face to face clinics for the most urgent patients. Over the last year, we have developed enhanced remote access to our services, which has resulted in over 260,000 virtual contacts. This has significantly reduced footfall on our sites, and encouraged the public to stay at home where possible. We have learned to adapt our services and make the best of our available resources, and this will be an area we seek to build on going forward.

2. Use of Theatre Suites at South Tyrone Hospital Site

The Trust has had to take the very difficult decision to stand down all but the most urgent elective surgery, including some red-flag cancer surgery and to redeploy staff from South Tyrone Hospital theatres (along with staff in other Trust Hospitals) to Craigavon Area Hospital to meet the urgent and immediate needs of extremely ill patients, especially both COVID and non-COVID patients needing ICU care. South Tyrone Hospital theatres continue to provide some procedures such as endoscopy services and some services on a regional basis.

3. Unmarked graves at South Tyrone Hospital Site

The Trust is currently developing plans to provide a Garden of Reflection on the South Tyrone site. Initial consultation is underway. Plans will consider how those who have been buried on the site and are connected to the workhouse may be remembered.

I trust this has helped to address the issues raised, but please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information.

Yours sincerely



SHANE DEVLIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

From the Office of the Minister
Diane Dodds MLA



Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Chair
Mid Ulster District Council
Mail to: Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
Belfast BT4 2JP
02890 529202
email: private.office@economy-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: CORR-0334-2021

08 February 2021

Dear Cathal,

Financial support for students

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 February 2021 in which you ask that I consider making a bid for funds to support students experiencing financial difficulties.

From the outset, let me just say that I genuinely appreciate how difficult the situation must be for all university students. These are unprecedented times for all of us, and the situation with regard to the spread of Covid-19 is changing on an almost daily basis.

I am nevertheless happy to advise that I recently bid for and secured an additional £37.7m from the Executive to fund a financial support package for higher education. This package includes:

- £22m to fund a one-off discretionary payment of £500 to all students from the UK and EU who are in full-time higher education in Northern Ireland, whether that is in a university or further education college setting;
- £8.5m to address student financial hardship, digital poverty and to support student unions with mental health provision;
- £4.1m for the provision of a safe working, learning and research environment; and
- £3.1m to compensate universities for lost income arising from rental pauses and releasing students from accommodation contracts.

These additional resources will help universities target financial support at those students who are most in need. Many students do not have adequate access to devices or the connectivity they need in order to participate in online learning. Digital poverty must not be a barrier to learning and this additional support will help address that.

Also included in this package is funding specifically for student unions to help them increase the mental health support they provide to students.

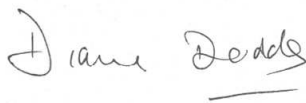
Furthermore, the institutions will receive funding to help them carry out modifications and invest in PPE and other equipment to ensure they can deliver teaching and learning in a Covid-compliant way.

Any Northern Ireland students experiencing financial hardship should first of all ensure that they have applied online at www.studentfinancenir.co.uk for all the financial assistance to which they may be entitled. The Department delivers financial support to eligible Northern Ireland students through Student Finance NI, and by the end of November 2020 had provided £84m in maintenance loans and a further £37m in maintenance grants as a contribution towards students' living costs during the academic year, including the cost of accommodation.

Students at Northern Ireland's universities who find themselves in financial hardship may be eligible to receive an award from the Support Funds made available by the Department, and managed by the higher education institutions. Earlier this financial year, I secured £1.4m from the Executive along with a further £1.4m from the Department's own budget for these Support Funds, making a total of £5.6m available to support students facing genuine financial hardship. This is even before I secured the additional hardship funds under the most recent support package.

I trust that you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Diane Dodds', with a horizontal line underneath.

DIANE DODDS MLA
Minister for the Economy



Chief Executive

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Cookstown Office
Burn Road
Cookstown
BT80 8DT

APPENDIX H

9 February 2021

Dear Councillor Mallaghan

Reinstatement of outpatient clinics

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 Feb 2021 in which you expressed your appreciation of our staff, who as you say are facing unprecedented challenges.

The third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has been significantly higher than previous waves. The highest number of COVID-positive inpatients in Antrim and Causeway Hospitals in the first wave was 73, in wave 2 this rose to 108 and in the current wave, the peak grew in mid-January to over 200 patients. Our response has demanded extraordinary effort and flexibility. Many staff have been redeployed to support key services such as critical care and respiratory medicine. You will appreciate that this has an inevitable impact on our ability to deliver some other services to the same level, for example in planned surgery, endoscopy and outpatients.

As we have taken these difficult decisions, we have been very mindful of the impact on service users and have tried where possible to maintain a level of red flag capacity for the most clinically urgent cases. For example, although we have had to stand down planned surgery in Antrim Hospital, we have maintained some capacity in Causeway Hospital and have been able to redirect patients there from Antrim to receive their treatment. Similarly, while our non-red flag outpatient activity has reduced by 40% compared to last January, red flag activity has dropped by only 26%, due to the unflagging efforts of our staff to maintain this urgent assessment pathway.

While we have now passed the peak of the third wave of COVID-19, we expect there to be a significant number of COVID-positive patients in our medical and critical care beds for some time to come. As a result, we are unlikely to be able to stand up all our services again in the short term. You will also appreciate that our staff are exhausted after almost a year of dealing with successive waves of the pandemic, with many not having had the opportunity to take annual leave, and that this will also affect our ability to restart services. Nevertheless you can be assured that I and my colleagues in the Northern Trust have in no way lost our focus on the need to deliver non-COVID activity, and that we will be reinstating our regular clinics and other assessment, diagnostic and treatment pathways as soon as circumstances permit.

Bretten Hall, Antrim Area Hospital Site, Bush Road, ANTRIM, BT41 2RL

Tel: 028 94426273

jennifer.welsh@northerntrust.hscni.net



I am confident that I can count on your continuing support as we continue to tackle the COVID pandemic, and look forward to better days ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jennifer Welsh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Welsh
Chief Executive



APPENDIX I

**Level 9
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7EG**

**Telephone: 028 90 515171
E-mail: beverley.wall@communities-ni.gov.uk
Our Ref: CORR-0243-2021
Date: 9 February 2021**

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Mid-Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 6DT

Via email: Eileen.forde@midulstercouncil.org

Dear Councillor Mallaghan,

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT ENQUIRY

Thank you for your letter of 3 February to Minister Hargey with regard to Council's request for clarification around outstanding Winter Fuel Payments and when these payments might be made. Minister has asked me to reply to your query.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) administer the Winter Fuel Payment on behalf of the Department for Communities (DfC) for customers in Northern Ireland and have done so since the scheme was established in 1998.

DWP recently developed a new Seasonal Payments Service digital solution to handle Winter Fuel Payments. All Winter Fuel Payments for 2020-21 are being paid through this new Digital system and unfortunately there have been issues with the system that have delayed payments to some customers throughout the UK.

DWP has deployed additional resources to ensure that the small numbers of customers who have not received a payment are reviewed as a matter of urgency and payments issued and apologise for any inconvenience caused.



DfC officials are in regular contract with their DWP counterparts and have raised Minister's concerns in relation to the delayed payments at a senior level. DfC staff are also engaging directly with staff in DWP on those Northern Ireland cases which are brought to our attention.

If residents within your District have any queries in relation to their Winter Fuel Payment they can contact DWP's Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 0800 731 0160 (Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 3.30pm) and should have their National Insurance Number ready when they call.

I hope you find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Beverley Wall
Deputy Secretary
Strategic Policy and Professional Services



APPENDIX J

From: Beverley Wall
Deputy Secretary

Level 9
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG

Telephone: (028) 9051 5171
e-mail: beverley.wall@communities-ni.gov.uk
Our ref: CORR-0243 2021
Date: 15 February 2021

Your ref C016/21

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office
Circular Road
DUNGANNON
BT71 6DT

Via email: Eileen.forde@midulstercouncil.org

Dear Councillor Mallaghan,

CHILD POVERTY TASK FORCE

Thank you for your letter dated 3 February 2021 regarding the above. Minister has asked me to respond on her behalf.

The Department for Communities (DfC) is responsible for taking forward poverty policy on behalf of the Executive. On 24 September 2020, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, former Minister for Communities, announced the commencement of work on the development of a suite of Social Inclusion Strategies, including an Anti-Poverty Strategy, as part of the commitments under New Decade, New Approach.

The Anti-Poverty Strategy will be developed using a co-design approach with meaningful involvement from stakeholders at all stages of the process. In October 2020, an Expert Advisory Panel was appointed and tasked with producing recommendations on the key themes, priorities and headline actions that the strategies should address; a Co-design Group with representatives from 27 voluntary and community sector organisations is helping to shape the development of the strategy; and a Cross-departmental Working Group will be responsible for developing the strategy action plan.

In September 2020 the Executive agreed to extend the 2016-2019 Child Poverty Strategy to May 2022. The purpose of this extension is to allow time for key



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

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stakeholders to be consulted on whether the Anti-Poverty Strategy covering all age groups is sufficient, or whether the development of a Child Poverty Strategy is also required.

The most recent Child Poverty Annual Report, for 2019/20, was published on the Department for Communities website in September 2020. It reports on the measures which departments are taking to ensure, as far as possible, that children do not suffer socio-economic disadvantage. The areas of focus and actions fall under four high level outcomes – health, education, safe/secure stable living environments and economic well-being.

With this work currently in hand, the Department would not propose convening an additional body such as a Child Poverty Taskforce at this time.

In the course of the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Department will of course continue to engage with, and listen to, the views and ideas of those impacted by poverty and their representative organisations, and will continue to work collaboratively across departments to address their needs.

The Co-Design Group will be conducting a number of focus sessions in the coming months where they will be actively seeking the views of stakeholders to inform their decisions on a range of specific areas of the recommendations. Please advise if Council would like to meet with the Co-Design Group at one of the proposed focus sessions.

There will also be a public consultation in the latter half of this year and we would welcome comments from the Council when this is published.

Subject to Executive approval, it is planned that the Child Poverty Annual Report for 2020/21 will be published in March 2021 and that an Anti-Poverty Strategy will be published in December 2021.

I hope you find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Beverley Wall
Deputy Secretary
Strategic Policy and Professional Services

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
Nichola Mallon MLA

Cllr Cathal Mallaghan
Mid-Ulster District Council

cathalmallaghan@hotmail.com

Room 708
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference: C013/21
Our reference: CORR 0252/21
15 February 2021

Dear Cllr Mallaghan,

INCLUSION OF DUNGANNON BYPASS IN RSTNTP

You wrote to the Finance Minister, Conor Murphy MLA, on 3 February regarding funding for the construction of a bypass for Dungannon. Minister Murphy has passed your letter to me for response as the Minister responsible for developing the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP).

My officials are currently developing the draft Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) which will set out future investment and improvement for our strategic transport networks, by road, rail and bus, to 2035. This Transport Plan will reflect the Department's commitment to improving connectivity for the benefit of our economy and communities across Northern Ireland. It will also help to inform the priorities for future development of the main road networks, including the A28/A29 Link Corridor running from Newry to Coleraine.

My Department recognises the congestion that occurs as a result of the volume of traffic passing through the towns/city along this corridor, in particular Armagh, Dungannon and Cookstown. We are keen to investigate ways to create more livable places that are not adversely impacted by heavy traffic.

All of these issues will be carefully considered as part of the RSTNTP proposals and I intend to publish my draft plan for public consultation later this year. The Council's views on this draft will be welcome. Following the consultation and publication of the finalised RSTNTP, funding will be sought through future budgets for the priority projects outlined within it.

My officials will continue to meet with the Council in the coming months as part of our wider engagement under the Roads Order and will be happy to provide updates on the draft plan. In the meantime, and particularly in the context of our work on the Mid

South West Growth Deal, we will continue to keep in touch to ensure a fully integrated approach to land-use and transport planning.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Mallon'.

NICHOLA MALLON MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

Marie Ward
Chief Executive



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

Our ref: ERT/005/2021

15 February 2021

Mr Anthony Tohill CEO
Mid Ulster District Council
Council Offices
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 DT

Dear Mr Tohill

Re: Notice of Motion – NZEB Code (Nearly Zero Energy Building)

At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on Monday 11 January 2021, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:

“This Council calls upon Finance Minister Conor Murphy to immediately implement the NZEB Code (Nearly Zero Energy Building Code) that the EU Directive requires the NI Department of Finance to implement by the end of this year. This Directive has is adopted into UK law 13 Council alerts the Minister to the following facts:

1. NI building code is 20 years behind GB. Every private sector house built between now and 2030 will have to be retrofitted to meet the UK's energy efficiency targets at 2030.
2. Every new house built in RoI is now more than £1000pa cheaper to run than an equivalent house in NI because of out of date building standards. All new homes in RoI thus have a typical Building Energy Rating (BER) of A2 or better.
3. RoI in November 2019 signed into law the nearly zero energy buildings (NZEB) regulation under part L of the Building Code for all domestic homes – not just public buildings as in GB. New Public Buildings in RoI have already been NZEB since 31st December 2018”.

Members of Newry, Mourne and District Council unanimously agreed to this Motion and urge your Council to support same.

Yours sincerely

Conor Mallon
Director of Enterprise, Regeneration and Tourism

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
17 FEB 2021
RECEIVED

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Newry Office
O'Hagan House
Monaghan Row
Newry BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
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Downpatrick BT30 6GQ

0330 137 4000 (Council)
council@nmandd.org
www.newrymournedown.org

Ag freastal ar an Dún
agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down
and South Armagh

Marie Ward
Chief Executive

RECEIVED
17 FEB 2021
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Comhairle Ceantair
an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne
and Down
District Council

Our ref: C/033/2021

8 February 2021

Mr Anthony Tohill CEO
Mid Ulster District Council
Council Offices
Circular Road
Dungannon
BT71 DT

Dear Mr Tohill

Re: Notice of Motion – Universal Credit Payments

At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on Monday 1 February 2021, the following Notice of Motion was agreed:

"As part of his Covid-19 response the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak increased Universal Credit payments by £20 per week until March 2021. This was a welcome and timely initiative given increased heating, energy and food costs from the pandemic. It must be noted that not all benefits were increased and so some in need did not get support. We must remember benefit cuts, in real terms took place over the past 10 years. However, this increase for what it is worth, is welcome. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now needs to ensure that the £20 increase extends beyond March of this year. As the economic facts show, this extra amount has helped families and claimants to meet the extra costs due to the pandemic and has supported many local businesses. In this motion we are asking that Newry Mourne and Down District Council to support the campaign to retain this extra payment and extend it to other benefits, the 120,000 children living in poverty in Northern Ireland deserve any assistance available to them".

Members of Newry, Mourne and District Council unanimously agreed to this Motion and urge your Council to support it also by writing to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlining your Council's support in extending the existing top up to Universal Credit to remain.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Marie Ward
Chief Executive

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O'Hagan House
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Ag freastal ar an Dún
agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down
and South Armagh

From the Minister of Finance

Cathal Mallaghan
Chair
Mid Ulster District Council
info@midulstercouncil.org

Private Office
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Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Tel: 028 9081 6216
Email: private.office@finance-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:
Our reference: CORR-0314-2021

Date: 16 February 2021

Dear Cathal

**CORR-0314-2021 COUNCILLOR CATHAL MALLAGHAN RE:
CORRESPONDENCE FROM MID ULSTER DISTRICT COUNCIL- FUNDING
PROPOSED BYPASS DUNGANNON**

Thank you for your letter of 3 February 2021 regarding funding provision for the Dungannon bypass.

Responsibility for road infrastructure including the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan rests with the Infrastructure Minister, as do decisions on how DfI's capital budget is allocated across the various areas for which it is responsible.

The Executive's Budget 2020-21 provided the Department for Infrastructure with a Capital funding envelope of £576 million. This is by far the biggest capital allocation and represents 36% of the Executive's total Capital budget.

I understand that the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) allocated £214.5 million of this specifically for roads. With regard to underspends announced as part of the January monitoring Executive colleagues were encouraged to come forward with additional bids but none were received from the Department of Infrastructure for additional roads schemes.

I note that you have also written to the Infrastructure Minister regarding this, and I would encourage Mid Ulster District Council to continue to engage with the Infrastructure Minister with any concerns that it has regarding capital investment on roads within the Mid Ulster area and the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan.

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CONOR MURPHY MLA
MINISTER OF FINANCE