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Anthony Tohill
Chief Executive
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8 October 2019

Dear Mr Tohill

I am writing to bring to your attention information at www.nidirect.gov.uk/brexit which may be helpful for your rate-payers if they have any Brexit related questions.

This online resource covers the most up-to-date advice on a range of issues.

I would be grateful if you would consider linking to www.nidirect.gov.uk/brexit from your website and share this information with your elected members, as it may be of help to them when dealing with their constituents.

In addition, a leaflet is being delivered into every household across Northern Ireland this week which includes Brexit advice and the contact details of organisations who can offer one-to-one advice.

The leaflet has been developed by the NICS in response to public demand for practical Brexit information and advice.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS McNABB
Head of Operations



Anthony Tohill CEO,
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Cookstown Office,
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11 October 2019

RE Motion on Welfare Mitigations Cliff Edge

Dear Anthony,

I hope you're well.

I am writing to you from Advice NI, a registered charity providing a voice for the independent advice sector in Northern Ireland and providing leadership and services our sixty-plus member organisations.

I'm sure you're aware of the looming welfare mitigations cliff edge that we're facing in March 2020. Ending the mitigations in March will bring immense hardship to thousands of residents in council areas across NI, and the majority of people and civic institutions want to see the mitigations extended beyond March.

The Welfare Reform in NI Report¹ published by the NI Affairs Committee and the Work and Pensions Committee in September 2019 stated there was political consensus that the "main parts of the mitigation package should continue", that there were "clear precedents for the UK Government legislating to continue payments", and that there "is therefore no good reason why the UK Government cannot bring forward legislation to extend the mitigation package."

The Report recommended that the "Secretary of State for Northern Ireland make a statement to Parliament as soon as possible making clear the UK Government's intention to pass legislation to extend the mitigation package, and bring forward such legislation to come into effect before the end of March 2020. The UK Government should provide funding for the mitigation package—including the Discretionary Support Scheme, the Universal Credit Contingency Fund, and funding for independent advisory services—in a Northern Ireland Budget Act."

¹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmworpen/2100/2100.pdf>



Professor Eileen Evason, chair of the Welfare Reform Mitigations Working Group, made the following statement in response to the Joint Report:

"You will be aware that, taking account of our special circumstances, the NI Executive introduced a programme of measures to mitigate the provisions of our welfare reform legislation. This programme will come to an end in March next year and we expect that the result will be a significant growth in financial hardship, arrears and evictions.

You will also have been briefed on the timely report produced by the Joint Committee in relation to Welfare Policy in NI. The report is an authoritative and comprehensive review of the position with clear recommendations. Most helpfully, the report sets out a way forward that will enable mitigation, with some improvement, to continue despite the absence of an Executive."

Given the urgency of the looming mitigations cliff edge, I wonder might you consider **debating and passing a motion** in council to demonstrate your support for an extension to the mitigations package. The above statements from the Joint Report and Professor Evason could be the basis of a form of words for the motion.

We'd be happy to meet to discuss further if you think it would help. I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,
Bridget.

(Dr Bridget Meehan, Advice NI Policy and Outreach Officer, bridget@adviceni.net).

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



Martin Kearney
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Our ref: RP4681
SCORR-0648-2019

Date: 4 October 2019

Dear Mr Kearney

Thank you for your letter, received on 10 July 2019, enclosing the Council's response to the Department's public consultation on Reshaping Breast Assessment Services. We note your comments and assure you that all views will be taken into consideration in the Department's final analysis.

The consultation proposals reflect the vulnerability of breast assessment services across Northern Ireland, and aim to place these services on a more reliable footing for the future. Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of staff across all Trust areas, we are not achieving the 14-day target for urgent referrals at a regional level. In the past ten years there have only been twelve individual months in which this target was met across all Trusts, and in the past five years it has only been met twice.

As you will be aware, the consultation closed on 30 August 2019, following several extensions to enable full and meaningful engagement with the public. We are currently reviewing several thousand consultation responses with a view to publishing our report in the months ahead.

No decisions about the service have yet been taken, however it is clear that, despite the best efforts of the excellent staff at all of the sites currently delivering these services, increasing numbers of patients are continuing to face long anxious delays in finding out if they have cancer. As you have recognised in your covering letter, it is therefore not a realistic or responsible option to do nothing to change the current service model.

The final decision on the future model for delivering breast assessment services will be taken in full consideration of available evidence, including the responses that have been submitted through the public consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Pengelly', is positioned below the 'Yours sincerely' text.

RICHARD PENGELLY

BY EMAIL

Ref: 19/CJS/KY/83

Date: 14 October 2019

Dear Sir / Madam

As you may be aware, International Children's Day, 20th November, this year marks the **30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**. The most widely ratified international treaty in the world and its ratification by the UK government has provided all children in the UK with rights to enable them to be safe, to develop, grow and flourish. Around the world people will be celebrating this important anniversary and the impact that the granting of these rights to children has had on their lives.

The UNCRC underpins the work we all undertake with and on behalf of children and young people and so we have invited children and young people from across Northern Ireland to celebrate this important [anniversary with us in W5 on 20th November](#). Around 2000 young people aged 3-17 will join us to find out more about their rights and how they can get involved in making sure government implements. Also on that day, we will also be joining other countries around the world in hosting a Children's Rights Summit where young activists will speak to Northern Ireland political decision-makers on key child rights challenges. Finally, we will mark the day by calling for Incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic legislation as soon as the opportunity arises, in keeping with the commitments made when it was ratified by the UK government

Many children's organisations across NI will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC in November, including:

1. Holding an event to celebrate the UNCRC anniversary, involving children, parents and staff;
2. Posting support for children's rights and the 30th anniversary on social media;

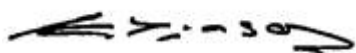
3. Educating staff on what the UNCRC means for their work;
4. Supporting children and young people to express their views on important matters, for example through arranging debates, art displays or making short videos;
5. Lighting up public buildings blue (reflecting the UN blue); or
6. Allowing children to access events or facilities for free for the day.

As an organisation whose work has an impact on children and young people, please give consideration to taking some action to **Mark the Day**, whether it is one of the actions above, or something else. We would encourage you to engage children and young people themselves in developing your plans, to be creative and to have fun marking this vitally important day. We have listed some ideas our Youth Panel have come up with on our website: (insert page)

We will collate all the activities happening across Northern Ireland, by Departments, public bodies, NGOs, schools, children's organisations, community groups and youth groups to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the UNCRC onto our website. So, once you have decided how you will **Mark the Day**, please send us through details using the [MARK THE DAY Action Feedback form](#), ideally before 1 November 2019.

I hope that you will join us in celebrating the anniversary of the UNCRC and please do not hesitate to contact my office if you want to discuss any of this further.

Yours sincerely



Koulla Yiasouma
Commissioner