

**Marie Ward**  
Chief Executive

Our ref: C/242/2021

20 December 2021

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



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

Dear Mr Tohill

**Re: Notice of Motion – Down High School**

At a Meeting of Newry, Mourne and Down District Council held on Wednesday 8 December 2021, the following Notice of Motion which was presented by the pupils of Down High School was agreed:

**"We are here as members of Down High School Eco group because we understand it is our generations duty to tackle climate change. We are very concerned about the increasing levels of CO2 emissions, and the low density of woodland. We would love to see the extension of the Downpatrick Schools' Community Woodland Project to plant 2026 trees as part of Cop26.**

**We want Newry, Mourne & Down District Council to help support us in the organisation of a Community Eco Fun Day to get the community and local schools involved in supporting tree planting and raising awareness of Climate Change. This project will help to:**

- **Raise awareness about the climate crisis**
- **Provide habitat for wildlife**
- **Provide a new recreational area for our community**

**We need our Council to show leadership in promoting Climate Change within the community.**

**We ask that Council write to the NI Assembly asking that a tree be provided for every pupil in N. Ireland and that we write to the other 10 Councils asking them to support this initiative".**

The pupils received an enthusiastic positive response from Members who fully supported the Motion.

Discussion took place regarding an initiative recently adopted by the Welsh Assembly whereby a tree was provided for every pupil in Wales and Members asked that a similar initiative be adopted in N. Ireland.



Members of Newry, Mourne and District Council expressed strong support for this Motion and urge your Council to also support it.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie Ward', is written over a horizontal line.

**Marie Ward**  
**Chief Executive**



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

Councillor Paul McLean  
Chair Mid Ulster District Council

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Your Ref:  
Our Ref: CORR-4107-2021

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021

Dear *Paul,*

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 December, in which you advised of the recent motion agreed by Mid Ulster District Council in relation to the recent support package I announced for the domiciliary and wider social care sector.

We have seen increasing pressures right across domiciliary care service provision for a number of years and I am acutely aware of the pressures currently facing domiciliary care providers.

As the Council's motion notes, on 24 November, I was pleased to announce a £23 million package for domiciliary care and the wider social sector. This funding will enable employers to offer improved rates and attract more staff to cover the shortfalls they have been experiencing. This is part of a larger strategy aimed at introducing a longer term solution involving multi-year budgets and further financial settlements for all health and social care services.

There has been a significant amount of engagement between the sector and Department officials on this funding package, with a clear recognition that there is a need to ensure this additional funding goes to frontline staff. There is a firm commitment from the employers that this will happen.

Given the pressures facing the domiciliary care sector at present, and the knock on effect this has on primary care services, the majority of funding will be allocated against increasing the hourly rate paid, to a maximum of £18 per hour, for domiciliary care providers. This comes with the expectation that providers will not only maintain service levels, but increase additional capacity. This additional funding will allow employers to offer enhanced rates of pay and better terms and conditions.

The remainder of the funding will be set against providing a pay rise to the care home and supported living sector.

While the Department cannot mandate what levels of pay employers should offer, I have been clear that this additional funding must be used to stabilise and enhance capacity across the sector to see us through a very challenging winter ahead.

On the wider issue, it is my view that social care needs to become a sustainable and attractive sector to work in. I have previously stated my intention to make much needed improvements and standardisation with regards to pay, training, and career pathways for the social care workforce.

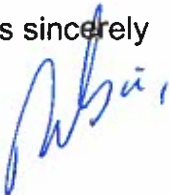
My Department is continuing to develop the future direction and funding of adult social care and support as part of the Reform of Adult Social Care. The expert panel report: 'Power to People: proposals to reboot adult care and support in NI' was published on 11 December 2017. The report makes a total of 16 proposals which include revisiting some of the fundamental building blocks of the system – including how much does care cost, how staff should be rewarded and how people contribute to the cost of their care.

Wider and fundamental reform of the social care sector is needed in order to build a more sustainable, equitable and resilient sector that serves the population of Northern Ireland. Work is currently ongoing to consider the proposals in the report to make the care and support system more effective, efficient and sustainable. Work on the Reform of Adult Social Care is likely to consider the cost of domiciliary care, and the cost of care homes, within the wider context of the entire adult social care system in Northern Ireland.

The "True Cost of Care" has also been a key interest of stakeholders throughout the reform process although the discussions have tended to focus on improving the pay of the workforce. While this is of vital importance and a lynchpin to all the Reform proposals, other elements such as planning a sustainable system of social care provision, improving the model of care, market regulation and improved regional tariff setting are also important aspects of considering a true cost.

I hope to launch a full public consultation on the Reform of Adult Social care before the end of the year.

Yours sincerely



**Robin Swann MLA**  
**Minister of Health**



## Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP**

*Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing  
and Communities*

*Minister for Intergovernmental Relations*

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and  
Communities**

4th Floor, Fry Building  
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To: All local authorities in the United Kingdom

6 January 2022

### HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee. To mark The Queen's historic 70-year reign, 2022 will see Platinum Jubilee celebrations throughout the UK and the Commonwealth as part of a year-long programme of events.

We want celebrations to be even bigger and better than previous national celebrations and for as many people as possible across the nation to participate, at any point from January to December 2022. You'll be aware that an announcement was made to extend the bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June 2022 to provide opportunities for communities throughout the UK to come together to celebrate this historic milestone.

We know that you and partnering organisations you work with understand your communities best and will support them to participate in celebrations. We also know you will want to make sure that this momentous occasion is marked fittingly, and many of you have already started planning exciting programmes of events for your local areas. To support your preparations, we wanted to highlight some of the opportunities for councils and your communities to engage with the Platinum Jubilee which are listed below:

- **Street Parties and 'The Big Jubilee Lunch'**
  - Street parties should be encouraged, and you can play an important role in supporting residents who want to organise parties for their neighbours. For example, relaxing road closure rules to enable street parties to take place as easily as possible will be important. Updated street parties' guidance on how to organise a street party can be found [here](#).
- **The Big Jubilee Lunch – 2 to 5 June 2022**
  - The Big Jubilee Lunch encourages communities to come together, celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better and will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community. More details can be found [here](#).
- **Beacon Lighting**
  - In keeping with the long tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, Weddings and Coronations, councils are encouraged to light beacons across the UK in the evening of 2 June 2022. Should you wish to take part, more information can be found in the specific Beacons website which can be found [here](#).
- **Platinum Jubilee Events/projects organised by Local Authority-owned civic amenities**
  - Libraries, museums, leisure centres, heritage sites etc are welcome to host their own individual events and projects to mark the Platinum Jubilee. For example, this could include exhibitions, concerts or special talks.

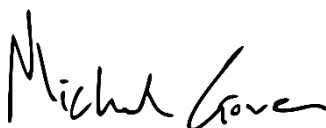


- **National Lottery Funding**
  - More than £22 million of National Lottery funding is being made available to help communities across the country come together to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. More information on the different funds available can be found [here](#).
- **The Platinum Jubilee Emblem**
  - The official Platinum Jubilee Emblem is available for use for all activities associated with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, including community and national events. It is free to download [from the Royal website](#), where detailed usage guidance can also be found.
- **The Queen's Green Canopy**
  - Everyone from individuals to community groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporations are encouraged to plant a tree for the Jubilee. The initiative runs from October 2021, when the tree planting season began, through to the end of the Jubilee year in 2022. More details can be found [here](#).
- **City Status Competition**
  - The Civic Honours competition launched on 8 June. These rare awards will grant winning towns and cities 'city status' and 'Lord Mayor or Provost status'. More details can be found [here](#).
- **Council led events**
  - Councils are welcome to organise and facilitate large scale Platinum Jubilee events and celebrations of their own choosing within their towns and cities, which could include their own civic occasion, for example, "The Mayor's Jubilee Party".
- **Local pageants**
  - Further guidance on how to host a local pageant will be available early in 2022.
- **Broadcast the TV feed.**
  - The use of local large screens in public places to show TV coverage of the Jubilee, which could include The Platinum Party at the Palace. These screenings could be complemented or enhanced by being a part of a wider event.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) have launched a Platinum Jubilee website which includes useful related resources. The website includes an interactive map, for people and organisations to contribute to and others to search for information on activities taking place near to them. Please explore the website and submit events and activities to be included on the map, which can be found [here](#).

We look forward to seeing the exciting and creative ways in which you and your communities choose to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

With every good wish,



**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP**  
**Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**  
**and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations**



**From: The Private Secretary**

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Causeway Exchange  
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Our ref: CORR-1701-2021  
Date: 13 January 2022

Cllr Paul McLean  
Mid Ulster District Council  
Dungannon Office  
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By email: [eileen.forde@midulstercouncil.org](mailto:eileen.forde@midulstercouncil.org)

Dear Paul,

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUEL POVERTY TASKFORCE**

Thank you for your recent letter to Minister Hargey. You wrote to make suggestions and offer valuable input regarding the increase in wholesale energy prices. The Minister passed your correspondence to officials who were developing fuel support schemes, and I am now writing to provide you with an update on that work.

Minister Hargey was pleased to announce that a £55 million Energy Payment Support Scheme has been approved by the Executive today. The Energy Payment Support Scheme is for vulnerable individuals struggling to meet rising energy costs due to the global fuel crisis.

A one-off payment of £200 will be made automatically to around 280,000 eligible individuals in receipt of specified benefits as soon as practicably possible. The payment will be made through existing payment channels, without the need for any application.

Individuals will be eligible for this payment if, during the qualifying week (Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021 inclusive), they were in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Pension Credit;
- Universal Credit;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; or
- Income Support.



You will be aware that the Minister has also announced a £2m Emergency Fuel Payment Scheme, operated by the Bryson Charitable Group, developed in very close collaboration with the Consumer Council, the Utility Regulator and a range of local energy companies in response to the recent and unprecedented energy price rises.

This is intended as an emergency fund for households facing a fuel crisis right now - households who are facing the real risk of disconnection in the next few days.

In terms of an update on the Emergency Fuel Payment Scheme, this has been developed in collaboration with Bryson Charitable Group, the Consumer Council and a range of local energy companies in response to the recent and unprecedented energy price rises.

A link to the website and form for the Fuel Crisis Fund is below, as well as a link for further information for the information announced by Minister Hargey today on NIdirect.

<https://www.brysongroup.org/news/emergency-fuel-payment-scheme>

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/energy-costs-support-schemes>

I trust that you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely,

**Rosheen Thompson**  
**Private Secretary**





Department for

**Infrastructure**

An Roinn

**Bonneagair**

[www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

**From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure  
Nichola Mallon MLA**

Councillor Paul McLean  
Mid Ulster Council  
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Your reference: C268/21  
Our reference: CORR-2080-2021  
14 January 2022

Dear Cllr McLean

## **BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR INVESTMENT IN ROADS – MID ULSTER**

Thank you for your letter of 20 December 2021 regarding investment in roads.

I recognise that there has been historical under-investment in our road network for a significant number of years and that many roads are in need of repairs. It has been independently established (Barton 2018) that some £143 million at 2018 prices is needed to maintain the structural integrity of Northern Ireland's road network. However, for many years, available funding has fallen well below the level required.

My officials met with you on 6 December to update you on investment in roads in Mid Ulster, which also included my commitment to rural roads with an investment of £2.7m from the Roads Recovery Fund for the Mid Ulster area. Recognising the need for investment in rural roads I set up an enhanced Roads Recovery Fund for £17m in 2021-22 of which £15m was specifically directed to works on rural roads, representing a 50% increase in funding compared to the previous year; the highest level of investment yet allocated to a specific rural roads funds. You were also made aware of my commitments to developing the road network in Mid Ulster through interventions such as my Blue/Green fund and Safer Routes to Schools.

Following legal challenges to the award of asphalt contracts in spring 2021, my officials have worked at pace to develop and implement a new asphalt resurfacing procurement strategy which consists of four phases with six new term contracts in each. The first phase, which includes term contracts for the Newry & Mourne, Down, Strabane, Magherafelt, Dungannon and Omagh, is currently out to tender with an anticipated award in February 2022. The second phase, which is scheduled to go to tender in January 2022 includes the Cookstown area.

In addition, two one-off resurfacing contracts have been tendered and are currently being assessed, including one to resurface a section of the A29 Cookstown dual carriageway. Similar one-off contracts are in the pipeline for implementation in the

coming months. The majority of schemes that are currently on hold due to these contractual issues will also be carried out as quickly as possible after new contracts are awarded.

In addition to resurfacing contracts I understand officials had also confirmed that work in relation to surface dressing and structural drainage works in Mid Ulster area continue to be delivered. This important work will increase road safety and serve to prolong the life of the road network for future years.

Looking ahead to future years and recognising the importance of investment in the road network to generate regionally balanced growth and to improve connectivity I have submitted capital funding requirements to the Finance Minister as part of the Budget 2022-25 process as follows: £100m in 2022-23, £110m in 2023-24 and £120m in 2024-25 for Structural Maintenance.

I trust you will find this information helpful.

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

**NICHOLA MALLON MLA**  
**Minister for Infrastructure**