



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ
WELTGESUNDHEITSORGANISATION
ВСЕМИРНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ЗДРАВООХРАНЕНИЯ

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DE L'EUROPE
REGIONALBÜRO FÜR EUROPA
ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЕ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЕ БЮРО

Head office:

UN City, Marmorvej 51,
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark
Tel.: +45 45 33 70 00; Fax: +45 45 33 70 01
Email: eurocontact@who.int
Website: <http://www.euro.who.int>

Date: 3 June 2021

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Chair
Mid Ulster District Council
Northern Ireland
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Our reference: Your reference: C085/21
Notre référence: Votre référence:
Unser Zeichen: Ihr Zeichen:
См. наш номер: На Ваш номер:

Dear Councillor Mallaghan,

I would like to congratulate the Mid Ulster District Council and the Monaghan County Council for the adoption of the “call-upon” motion on the considerations envisioned to control the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have read with interest about the critical and pertinent aspects of COVID-19 vaccination that the motion has outlined, including ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines to countries, irrespective of their income levels, and the need to speed up the production and distribution of vaccines. These are very much in line with WHO’s vision, within the overarching framework of the Access to COVID-19 Tool Accelerator, which brings together research and development by academia, private sector and government initiatives, thereby charting a way to end the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic, being global in nature, requires a coordinated response from entities at all levels – national, regional and local. I strongly feel that the engagement of local councils like yours will play an important role in keeping health as the central agenda of human development. In addition, the engagement of local councils in policy dialogues underpins the pivotal role played by subnational bodies in encouraging compliance with and effective implementation of national policies so that the needs of local communities are addressed.

This critical and unique role of local entities is recognized by WHO/Europe in the European Programme of Work, 2020–2025 (EPW), which sets out a vision of how WHO/Europe can support countries better in meeting their citizens’ health expectations. With its emphasis on keeping people at the centre, WHO/Europe, through the EPW, looks forward to working closely with national policy-makers, practitioners and local institutions, as appropriate.

I wish you well in your efforts and thank you again for the endorsement of WHO’s vision to ensure everyone everywhere benefits from the global public good, the COVID-19 vaccine.

Yours very truly,


Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge
Regional Director

Encl.:

European Programme of Work, 2020–2025.

Copy for information to:

Ms Nicky Shipton-Yates, WHO Policy Manager, International Directorate, Department of Health and Social Care, 39 Victoria Street, 5th Floor South, London SW1A 0EU, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

H.E. Mr Simon Manley, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Avenue Louis Casai 58, Case postale 6, Cointrin, Geneva CH-1216, Switzerland

H.E. Ms Emma Kate Hopkins, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Denmark
British Embassy, Kastelsvej 36-40, Copenhagen Ø 2100, Denmark



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Eileen Forde
Member Support Officer
Mid Ulster District Council
Dungannon Office

Belfast Regeneration Directorate
Level 4
9 Lanyon Place
Lanyon Quay
Belfast
BT1 3LP
Phone: 028 9082 9274
email:
Ciaran.donnelly@communities-ni.gov.uk

Via Email: Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Our ref: CORR-0957-2021

1 June 2021

Dear Ms Forde

High Streets Task Force

I write in relation to your correspondence of 18 May 2021 in which you request contact details for the High Street Task Force (HSTF).

Whilst you have been referred to the Department of Communities (DfC), which provides programme management and secretariat support to the Task Force, it is worth emphasising that the HSTF is an Executive Office led cross-departmental initiative.

The issues are much wider than the remit of any one Department and the impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the resultant impact on town and city centres has reinforced the need for a coordinated strategic response to both the immediate and longer term recovery priorities for the town and city centres.

From a Local Government perspective you may want to note that the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) are participating on the HSTF.

You will be interested to note that The High Street Task Force (HSTF) has set up four sub groups which will take forward work in relation to priority themes, namely:

- Influencing Policy and Strategy
- Developing Capacity
- Developing and Promoting Good Practice
- Influencing and Shaping Intervention and Investment

The Chairs and members of the sub groups have recently been appointed and have begun their work. Each sub group has been asked to ensure contact is made at the appropriate time with stakeholders who have expressed an interest in engaging with them.

Your request has been passed to the HSTF Secretariat and in turn the sub groups, who will be in touch in due course to advise Mid Ulster District Council on how they can input to the work of the Task Force.

In the meantime if you need to contact the Secretariat you may use this email address:

DFC-HSTFSecretariat@communities-ni.gov.uk

I trust that this provides you with the information required and I would thank you for taking an interest in the work of the HSTF.

Yours sincerely



Ciaran Donnelly
Director / Belfast Regeneration Directorate



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

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

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Magherafelt Office
Ballyronan Road
Magherafelt
BT45 6EN

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

Your reference: C051-21
Our reference: INV-0198-2021
16 June 2021

Dear Councillor,

Ardboe Aerodrome

Thank you for your letter dated 17 May regarding the above, Minister Mallon has asked that I respond on her behalf.

Whilst I recognise the area was the location of a former Aerodrome, the Department does not have any responsibility for the site, nor would we have any powers for redevelopment or investment plans. To that end, it would not be appropriate for the Minister for Infrastructure to meet to discuss the future of the former Aerodrome.

KATHRYN MCFERRAN
Private Secretary to the Minister

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



Department of

Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Máinnistrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

Councillor Cathal Mullaghan
Mid-Ulster District Council
Legal and Civic Services Department

Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST, BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 2556
Email: private.office@health-ni.gov.uk

Your Ref:

Our Ref: CORR-1982-2021

Date: 14th June 2021

Dear *Cathal,*

Motion: Autism Diagnosis

Thank you for your correspondence of 4 June 2021 in relation to the Motion carried at Mid-Ulster District Council in May.

I am acutely aware of the extensive waiting lists for autism assessments and the challenging circumstances this presents for children, their families and carers. I realise the impact this can have on their emotional health and wellbeing, on their personal development and on their education and I acknowledge that this is unacceptable.

My officials have been engaging with the Health and Social Care Board who are meeting with individual Trusts who have lengthy waiting lists to determine the factors which are contributing to them and there is no doubt that this is an area that will need redressed.

In recent months, mindful of the challenges that are being experienced by individuals and families who have an autism diagnosis, or who may be waiting for an assessment, I have taken a number of steps to address the need for early intervention and greater support.

You may be aware that on 8 March I published a cross-departmental Autism – Interim Strategy which sets out the key priorities which will be addressed in 2021 and 2022 with a focus on early intervention and improving pathways of care. The interim strategy is supported through a range of outcome based actions across government departments and our health and social care sector and aligned to our Programme for Government.

As part of this interim Strategy I am committed to listening to the voices of those who matter, that is autistic people, their families and carers. Underpinning this my Department has established an Autism Forum, comprised of people with lived experience and representatives from the community and voluntary sector organisations who represent them. A role of this Forum will be to inform and co-produce a longer term autism strategy and work on this will commence later this year.

However, improving support for autistic people and indeed those waiting for an assessment is a collective responsibility for us all.


In each of our Trust areas, multi-agency autism forums work in partnership to enhance understanding of autism within our communities and wider society to enable social inclusion for all. From these forums I am also aware that at least two of our Council areas, Mid and East Antrim and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (ABC) Council have been working closely with representatives from Autism Services in their respective Trust areas as they work towards creating autism friendly services within their boroughs.

Within the Western Trust area, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council are active participants in the Western Area Autism Forum. Indeed, in December 2020 my officials, alongside representatives from Autism Services in the Western Trust area participated in a week of events being held by the Council to raise awareness of disabilities, which included autism, by delivering a presentation on future priorities to be delivered through the Autism – Interim Strategy and supports available within the area, this was well received.

In acknowledgement of your intention to host a workshop with relevant stakeholders to explore how support can be delivered to autistic people and their families within the area, I would encourage you to establish a partnership with colleagues in the Western Trust, or indeed participate in their Autism Forum.

The challenges of an autism diagnosis upon an individual and a family cannot be underestimated and the prevalence of diagnosis within our society provides stark evidence that we must no longer expect autistic people to adapt to our society, we must seek ways of increasing understanding within our communities and services which can adapt to their needs and improve inclusion and support for all.

Yours sincerely



Robin Swann MLA
Minister of Health

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER



Department of
Education

www.education-ni.gov.uk

Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
BANGOR
BT19 7PR

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Chair
Mid Ulster District Council

Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

private.office@education-ni.gov.uk

11 June 2021

Your Ref: C110/21
CORR-0977-2021

Dear *Cathal*

Thank you for your letter of 4 June regarding the Mid Ulster District Council's Notice of Motion asking that sex and relationship education guidance for schools is inclusive and covers LGBTQ+ relationships and transgender identities.

I thought it might be useful to provide some background on the current position of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and the work my Department is currently taking forward to support its delivery.

To support schools in delivering the teaching of RSE in schools CCEA launched its online RSE Hub which provides a central repository of age appropriate information and value-based guidance on the topic of RSE. The LGBTQ+ guidance materials and resources aim to: challenge homophobic, transphobic or any other type of bullying; explore gender stereotypes; challenge gender inequality; promote respect and inclusivity; promote healthy and respectful relationships; value diversity and the uniqueness of individuals, including diversity in sexual attraction; provide information on the terms associated with gender identity and transgender; provide information on how young LGBTQ+ people can access support; and contribute to the development of young people's self-esteem and resilience. This approach is aimed at enhancing

teaching of RSE in schools by providing teachers with resources which increase their competence and confidence in teaching and which ensure that the wide-ranging needs of our young people are met.

In the current financial year I have provided funding to CCEA to support the development of further resources for schools. These will be subject to key stakeholder consultation, including LGBTQ+ organisations, before being posted to the RSE Hub. CCEA is currently developing a programme of Teacher professional learning related to RSE and a non-statutory progression framework which will set out in greater detail what should be taught at each Key Stage. I have committed further funding to support this work during 2020/21 and my officials are working with CCEA to develop a detailed programme of work.

In October 2019 CCEA published updated [RSE Guidance for Schools](#) which highlights that all pupils, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably on grounds of their sexual orientation.

I hope you find this information useful and that it highlights the positive steps that are being taken to ensure that the resources being made available are inclusive, consistent and relevant to the needs of all young people.



Peter Weir MLA
Minister of Education

From the Office of the Minister
Paul Frew MLA



Cllr Paul McLean
Chair
Eileen Forde
Member Support Officer
Mid Ulster District Council
info@midulstercouncil.org

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

Our Ref: CORR-0907-2021

Your Ref: C107/21

18 June 2021

Dear Paul,

RE: Paid Special Leave for Victims of Domestic Abuse

I am replying to the previous Chair, Cllr Mallaghan's correspondence of 4 June, asking my predecessor, Diane Dodds, to consider the motion calling for introduction of legislation to create a statutory entitlement to ten days of paid special leave for victims of domestic abuse.

I am very much aware that there is growing recognition among employers of the need to provide better support for employees who are victims of domestic abuse, and I would agree that this should be the case.

I understand that some progressive and compassionate employers already have pay and leave arrangements in place for employees who face this distressing circumstance. I do recognise, though, that this is not universal and there will likely be gaps in provision.

My immediate priority, however, for employment rights in this mandate is the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Bill currently in the Assembly. With regard to the issue of statutory paid leave from work for victims of domestic abuse, I have instructed my officials to consider this important issue alongside a range of other employment related matters as part of developing a longer term vision for employment relations in Northern Ireland.

In the meantime, I would encourage all employers to support employees who are victims of domestic abuse with empathy and flexibility. The guidance produced by the DoJ and DoH entitled: '[Guidance for Employers on Developing a Workplace](#)

2021

**MARKING 100 YEARS OF ECONOMIC SUCCESS AND
A NEW DECADE OF INNOVATION A 10X ECONOMY**



[Policy on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse](#)' should be used as a source of support and information in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Frew', is centered on the page.

Paul Frew MLA
Minister for the Economy

From the Minister of Finance

Councillor Cathal Mallaghan

Eileen.Forde@midulstercouncil.org

Private Office
2nd Floor
Clare House
303 Airport Road West
BELFAST
BT3 9ED
Tel: 028 9081 6216
Email: private.office@finance-ni.gov.uk

Our reference: *CORR-2849-2020*

Date: *25 May 2021*

Dear Councillor Mallaghan,

The Administration of Rate Relief and Funding to Local Businesses.

Thank you for your correspondence dated 8 December 2020 and 6 January 2021 regarding the Covid Rates Relief Scheme and other support schemes. I must apologise for the excessive delay in responding to your correspondence and hope that in the time elapsed many of your issues may have progressed to a satisfactory resolution.

Your Council asked my Department to review the criteria in relation to Department's 'Rate Holiday' relief scheme and stated that businesses such as insurance offices, reflexologists and small garages were excluded. In 2020-21, I introduced a 4 months (33%) rates holiday for all businesses and a targeted 12 months rate support for businesses identified as being in the greatest need of support. This was based on expert advice from the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre (UU EPC). In 2020-21 this provided £288 million of additional support for businesses affected by the pandemic.

Building on this, my Department sought updated advice from the UU EPC and this year is providing a further £230 million of support to almost 29,000 businesses here. Given that the level of support now exceeds £0.5 billion over two years, relief has had to be targeted. Sectors such as financial services, personal health services, and garage workshops were not identified as being in the greatest need and therefore were not included in the 100% rate holiday. Retail businesses, including car showrooms, were identified as being severely affected by the pandemic and were granted the relief. That is the reason why the business premises you highlight do not qualify for 100% relief.

I also introduced a number of other rate support measures to assist businesses including: an 18% reduction on the non-domestic Regional Rate for 2020-21 and the freezing of that Rate at the reduced level for 2021-22; a two month deferment in the issuing of rate bills in 2021-22 so as to assist with cash flow issues; and continued support provided through the Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR), which automatically applies a minimum of 20% and a maximum of 50% rate relief to rate bills of small businesses here with Net Annual Values (NAV) up to £15,000.

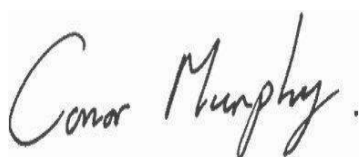
The financial support provided through Localised Restrictions Support Scheme (LRSS) has been a lifeline to businesses. It was at one stage providing up to £12.38 million in financial support each week to businesses here. As of 24 May, over £315 million in support has been paid out to over 15,300 eligible businesses. The legal authority to provide assistance given to my Department relates only to those businesses that are restricted by the Health Regulations; when business sectors come out of restrictions, my Department can no longer provide payment. Payments have now been completed.

LRSS was linked to the restrictions placed on businesses by the Health Protection Regulations, which changed several times since October 2020, making the LRSS increasingly complex to administer. I acknowledge that there were some delays in processing applications and making payments. I thank you for your offer of assistance; however, processing of the vast majority of claims has now been completed.. LPS has been regularly reviewing all approved applications to ensure the scheme is being administered in line with the associated regulations and to identify instances where incorrect payments have been made, including payments made outside of the scope of the regulations. This kind of 'post event assurance checking' is encouraged by the Audit Office in Covid funding schemes and it was always intended that we would do this.

As for applications which were rejected, I can advise that rejection e-mails, explaining the reason for the rejection, were issued in each case. I am sorry that some applicants had difficulty in getting someone to deal with their queries by phone. Regrettably, due to the number of enquiries received by the Department in respect of Covid grant schemes it was necessary to restrict enquiries to e-mail only. A number of mailboxes were set up to facilitate this process and full information was available on all schemes at www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-localised-restrictions-support-scheme.

I hope that you find this response helpful.

Is mise le meas

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Conor Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**CONOR MURPHY MLA
MINISTER OF FINANCE**

SR/cd/NOM143/CS20.4.2021/21.10

24 May 2021

Mr Adrian McCreesh
Chief Executive
Mid Ulster District Council
Cookstown Office
Burn Road
Cookstown BT80 8DT

Via email: Adrian.McCreesh@midulstercouncil.org

Dear Adrian

I would advise you that at a recent meeting of Ards and North Down Borough Council the under noted Resolution was agreed and ratified:

‘That this Council deplors the refusal of the Stormont authorities to permit a stone sculpture to mark the Northern Ireland centenary to be placed at the seat of government; instructs the Chief Executive to convey our dismay to the Speaker of the Assembly and call for reversal of the decision so that due respect can be shown to those who value our constitutional position as a part of the United Kingdom; and that this council will commemorate NI’s centenary with installations of stones depicting the map of Northern Ireland and 100 years celebrated and inscribed at Comber Square, Ards Conway Square, Bangor Castle, Donaghadee War Memorial and Holywood town centre, and asks officers to bring back a report outlining costs and possible inclusion in the centenary budget for same, and will write to all other councils to follow our example.’

The Council would welcome your response to this matter.

Yours sincerely



STEPHEN REID
Chief Executive