

A REPORT ON DECISIONS TAKEN DURING DECEMBER 2018 BY NORTHERN IRELAND DEPARTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND (EXECUTIVE FORMATION AND EXERCISE OF FUNCTIONS) ACT 2018

On 5 November 2018 the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in accordance with section 3(2) of the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Act 2018, published guidance about the exercise of the functions of Northern Ireland departments during the period for Executive Formation. This guidance requires Northern Ireland departments to prepare a monthly summary report of decisions taken by senior officials using the guidance and to share this with the Secretary of State, who will in turn promptly make it available to Parliament and to the Northern Ireland political parties.

This Summary Report has been prepared by the Executive Office and provides information on the decisions taken by Northern Ireland departments in December 2018.

Decisions Taken by Northern Ireland Departments: December 2018

Department	Description
The Executive Office	A decision was taken to further extend the terms of office of two members of the Board of the Victims and Survivors Service for a twelve month period until December 2019. This will ensure that the Board can continue to exercise appropriate governance and that meetings remain quorate. It will also allow incoming Ministers to decide at that time on reappointments.

Summary of Decisions Taken in December 2018

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

A decision was taken to continue progressing the Environment Fund (EF) 2019-22 by notifying organisations (not-for-profit organisations and councils) of the outcome of an earlier pre-application stage. Any letters of offer, following the full application stage, will be made to successful organisations once Department of Finance approval and a 2019-20 budget is agreed. The EF is used to deliver strategic environmental priorities across Northern Ireland and the current fund expires on 31 March 2019.

A decision was taken to extend the appointment of three Board Members of the Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland by a further six months to 30 June 2019, to enable the continued delivery of its services.

A decision was taken to make and lay The Carcase Classification and Price Reporting Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018. These revoke and replace the Beef and Pig Carcase Classification Regulations (NI) 2010. These regulations were required before the UK leaves the EU, to create enforcement powers for Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 2017/1182 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 2017/1184, and also to correct out of date references to other EU legislation.

Department For Communities

A number of decisions were taken in respect of public appointments and reappointments to ensure the maintenance of sustainable and efficient public services:

Historic Monuments Council: appointments of Chair and nine members

Libraries NI: extension of the terms of 3 members and reappointment of a further 3 members

National Museums NI: extension of the terms of appointment of the Chair of the Board and seven Trustees

Summary of Decisions Taken in December 2018

NI Museums Council: extension of the terms of appointment of two members of the Board

W5: extension of the terms of one member of the Board

A decision was taken to transfer 59 ex-Ministry of Defence houses to Clanmil Housing Association at nil value. This is consistent with the commitments of the former NI Executive and Ministers.

Decisions were taken to make: The Occupational Pensions (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018, to protect the pension rights of early leavers from inflation; The State Pension Revaluation for Transitional Pensions Order (Northern Ireland) 2018 and The State Pension Debits and Credits (Revaluation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018, to ensure that the rate of the protected payment and the pension debits and credits components of the new State Pension are increased in line with inflation. These Orders ensure that parity is maintained across the United Kingdom in accordance with section 87 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

A decision was taken to activate a scheme of Emergency Financial Assistance to support households which had suffered from flooding. This is consistent with the commitments of previous Executives and Ministers and ensures the maintenance of sustainable and efficient public services.

Department for the Economy

A decision was taken to appoint new Chairs to the Governing Bodies of the Northern Regional College (NRC) and the South West College (SWC). The terms of the two appointments allow for an incoming Minister to review, confirm or terminate the appointments.

Summary of Decisions Taken in December 2018

Department of Education

A decision was taken to announce, in January 2019, the release of a second tranche of 16 projects to 'advance in planning' under the School Enhancement Programme (SEP). The SEP was established in June 2012 and targets investment on immediate and pressing needs in schools through capital works valued between £0.5m and £4.0m. The 2nd call of SEP opened in January 2017 and 165 applications were received from schools. On 8 May 2018 the Department announced 25 successful school projects to advance in planning.

A decision was taken to commence a Public Appointment exercise for the Northern Ireland non-executive directors of the Middletown Centre for Autism (a North/South project). The current term for NI directors will expire in March 2019. This will ensure the continuation of the Centre's legal obligations under Company law.

A decision was taken to issue Interim Guidance on the Children's Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. The Act places a duty on designated public bodies, known as 'children's authorities', to co-operate to improve the well-being of children and young people, and empowers the Department of Education to issue guidance to the children's authorities on the operation of the Act. The Interim Guidance will assist children's authorities in understanding the requirements of the CSCA and fulfilling their obligations under the Act; and provides advice about factors to be taken into account in developing policy or procedures relating to children's services or delivering services for children.

Department of Finance

A decision was taken to extend the terms of two Board members of the Utility Regulator for a period of up to six months, effective from 1 January 2019. This decision will ensure appropriate Board membership / expertise and transition at an important juncture for the organisation, particularly in preparing the utility sector for leaving the EU.

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Department of Health

A decision was taken to publish the report of the Review of Regional Facilities for Children and Young People in December 2018. The report makes 10 recommendations, including the key recommendation to establish a joint care and justice campus for children and young people, encompassing the regional juvenile justice centre at Woodlands and the regional secure care centre at Lakewood.

A decision was taken to give both the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT) permission to progress their Acute Mental Health Facility projects to the first stage of design at an estimated combined cost of £4.5m. The proposed new facilities will provide safe, effective and sustainable psychiatric inpatient care that will prove conducive to developing a therapeutic environment for patients.

A decision was taken to commence, from January 2019, the legislative provisions in Part 4 of the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (NI) 2016. The Act places a statutory duty on the Department to promote organ transplantation by providing information and increasing awareness about donation; and to approve and publish the associated Promoting Organ Donation and Transplantation Policy Statement, which introduces a coordinated approach to promotion, communication, education and medical workforce training.

A decision was taken to proceed with the Health and Social Care staff pay award proposals tabled on November 22. The pay award is based on applying the 2018 English NHS pay settlement to current pay rates in Northern Ireland and represents an estimated 3% increase (or just over £60 million) on the pay bill for staff on Agenda for Change terms and conditions.

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A decision was taken on 19 December to publish terms of reference for the regional review of neurology services. The review will identify the optimal service configuration for neurology services for the next 10-15 years. A Review Team, led by Consultant Neurologist Dr John Craig, has been established to take the review forward.

A decision was taken to publish the outcome of a consultation on proposed changes to populating the Northern Ireland Drug Tariff with wound care management products. It was also decided that Part IXA of the England & Wales Drug Tariff would be used to populate the Northern Ireland Drug Tariff from 1 April 2019. The Northern Ireland Formulary sets out a preferred list of products for dispensing and is also being updated for wound care management products.

Department for Infrastructure

A decision was taken to make The Road Transport (International Passenger Services) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 to update legislation in respect of International Passenger Services. This is required to reflect current EU Regulations and implement the Interbus Agreement in respect of international bus/coach arrangements.

Decisions were taken to issue a Decision Notice refusing planning permission for a Tourist Resort at Gublusk Bay, Killadeas, Co Fermanagh and a Decision Notice granting planning permission for a wind farm at Golandun, Killeter, Castledearg, Co Tyrone.

Decisions were taken to further extend the appointments of the Chair of Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners (LPHC) and the Chair of Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC) to 31

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December 2019. This will ensure continuity of leadership pending the initiation of new public appointment competitions.

A decision was taken to publish the NI Flood Risk Assessment (NIFRA) 2018 to enable the Department to progress the requirements of the EU Floods Directive, including development of the 2021-2027 Flood Risk Management Plan to address all aspects of flood risk management including prevention, protection and preparedness. The Water Environmental (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 required the documents to be published by 22 December 2018.

Department of Justice

A number of decisions were taken in respect of public appointments and reappointments:

Appeals Tribunal: An extension and a further extension, for a one year period, of the terms of office for two members

Prisoner Ombudsman: The appointment of a new Prisoner Ombudsman

RUC George Cross Foundation: Appointment of three Trustees

Independent Monitoring Board: Appointment of 15 new Members.

**THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
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