

Summary of the decisions reported by NICS during August 2023

Department	Decision
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs	<p>A decision was taken to make a Statutory Rule to correct two co-ordinates which define one of the three areas in the Maidens Special Area of Conservation, and which are provided in Table 3 of Schedule 8 to the Marine Protected Areas (Prohibited Methods of Fishing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve the extension of an appointment to the UK Climate Change Committee's Adaptation Sub-Committee (ASC).</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve funding for the Access and Inclusion Programme and the associated transfer of £300k to the Department for Communities in support of this programme.</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish The Spirit Drinks (Amendment) Regulations 2023 post-engagement stakeholder letter on the DAERA website and issue it to targeted stakeholders.</p> <p>A decision was taken to provide retrospective approval for the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) business plan for 2022-23.</p> <p>A decision was taken to endorse the publication of the 19th Annual Report of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM).</p> <p>A decision was taken to continue to defer the publication of the Northern Ireland Food Strategy Framework in the absence of Ministers, following an earlier decision to defer its publication taken in February 2023</p> <p>A decision was taken to defer the finalisation and publication of a new Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland in the absence of Ministers.</p>
Department for Communities	<p>A decision was taken to approve the gift of the Lanto Synge Collection of Embroidery to the Ulster Museum</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve the business case to secure Strategic Investment Board (SIB) consultancy support to undertake an Intermediate Rent Funding Model Market Sounding Exercise.</p> <p>A decision was taken to make the following regulations, thereby ensuring maintenance of a single system of benefits across GB and NI in line with Section 87 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015 (Commencement No. 17) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023; • The Child Support Fees (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023; • The Social Security (Infected Blood Capital Disregard)

	<p>(Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to consult on a draft Equality Impact Assessment to introduce the Pensions (Extension of Automatic Enrolment) Bill to maintain a single system of pensions across the UK.</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve the Libraries NI Business Plan 2023/24 to support operational planning, delivery, and performance monitoring.</p> <p>A decision was taken to appoint a Commissioner to the Board of the Charity Commission from a merit-based process for the selection of candidates, to allow compliance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.</p> <p>A decision was taken to enable the auto-enrolment of the Department's non legal judicial office holders into the workplace pension scheme NEST (National Employment Savings Trust).</p> <p>A decision was taken to commence a public appointment competition for new Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board Members.</p> <p>A decision was taken to appoint an interim Vice-Chair to the Sport NI Board and to commence a public appointment competition for a new Vice-Chair.</p> <p>A decision was taken to extend the appointment of one Member of the Historic Buildings Council from 1 September 2023 until a formal reappointment is made.</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve Belfast City Council's request to lease lands at River Terrace, Belfast to the Lower Ormeau Residents' Association Group at a nominal rent and therefore less than best price (deemed to be £1,500), in line with Section 10 of The Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.</p>
Department for Economy	<p>A decision was taken to approve funding for the Digital Transformation Flexible Fund.</p> <p>A decision was taken to maintain the status quo in relation to the mandatory status of crush protection devices on allterrain vehicles.</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish the Department's Disability Action Plan and Audit of Inequalities for the period 2022 – 2027.</p> <p>A decision was taken to agree to the extension to Northern Ireland of the Accounting Standards (Prescribed Bodies)(United States of America and Japan) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.</p>
Department of Finance	<p>A decision was taken to request that the UK Government amend Article 4(a)(v) of the Statutory Rules (Northern Ireland) Order 1979.</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish the Annual Procurement Report,</p>

	<p>which is a synopsis of the application of the Executive's procurement policy.</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve the NI Water Total Rewards Evolution (Pay Transformation), which involves restructuring NI Water's salary framework from pay progression to performance related pay linked to market rates.</p> <p>A decision was taken to extend an interim solution in respect of terms and conditions for a group of staff in the Department for Infrastructure's Roads and Rivers teams.</p> <p>A decision was taken to renew Northern Ireland Civil Service membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme.</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve the extension of the provisions in the Coronavirus Act 2020 in relation to death registration in Northern Ireland.</p>
Department of Health	<p>A decision was taken to extend the public appointments of five Non-Executive Members across three of the Department's Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs): the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust; the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust; and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.</p> <p>A decision was taken to include Northern Ireland in a procurement by the UK Health Security Agency which may enable an immunisation programme against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) for older adults in the autumn of 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to take forward the following regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Health and Social Care Pension Schemes (Remedial Service) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023; • The Firefighters (Remedial Service) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 <p>The regulations were subsequently made on 7 September 2023</p> <p>A decision was taken to increase the Foster Care Allowance to incorporate an uplift for 2023/24.</p> <p>A decision was taken to issue updated guidance to Health and Social Care organisations on change or withdrawal of services.</p>
Department for Infrastructure	<p>A decision was taken to make a Statutory Rule: The Road Races (Bushwhacker Rally) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to make a Statutory Rule: The Road Races (Knockagh Hill Climb) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to make a Statutory Rule: The Parking Places (Disabled Persons' Vehicles) (Amendment No. 5) Order 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to launch a public appointment competition for Councillor Board members of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners</p>

	<p>(BHC), Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA) and Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners (LPHC).</p> <p>A decision was taken to reappoint one non-executive board member of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority whose first term is due to come to an end, and to extend by three months the term of a second non-executive board member whose second term is due to come to an end.</p> <p>A decision was taken to formally reappoint four nonexecutive board members for a second term to the Board of the Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners.</p> <p>A decision was taken to launch a public appointment competition for a Chair and one Non-Executive Director (NED) to the Board of NI Water, to be appointed from 1 April 2024.</p> <p>A decision was taken to agree to the Department for the Economy's Offshore Renewable Energy Action Plan (OREAP) insofar as it engages the Department for Infrastructure.</p> <p>A decision was taken to change of the name of the "Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan" to the "Eastern Transport Plan".</p> <p>A decision was also taken to publicly launch the Eastern Transport Plan and the Fermanagh and Omagh Transport Plan.</p> <p>A decision was taken to issue guidance to ensure that the Department for Infrastructure fulfils its regulation role of the NI taxi industry, by ensuring that local taxi operators are aware and compliant with Court judgements issued in 2021 by the Supreme Court and the Divisional Court in England & Wales on the interpretation of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998, regarding the acceptance of bookings from passengers.</p> <p>A decision was taken to issue a Notice of Opinion to refuse an outline application for a mixed-use development and to issue a Notice of Opinion to approve a full application for a major road development, both at Blaris, Lisburn West and, subject to no request for a hearing, to issue the subsequent planning decisions.</p> <p>A decision was taken to allow the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) to test cars (up to 3,500kg) and motorcycles under their chassis number, rather than their Ukrainian registration number if the vehicle belongs to an individual residing in the UK under one of the Ukrainian visa schemes.</p> <p>A decision was taken to make the Confirmation Order under Article 13 of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 to confirm the Cutts Control Structure Refurbishment Scheme.</p> <p>A decision was taken to give approval for the Department for Transport to make the necessary legislative amendments to the Road Traffic Order (Northern Ireland) 1981 on behalf of the Department for Infrastructure in order to retain the interpretive effects of Articles 3 &</p>
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	<p>10 of the European Motor Insurance Directive (2009/103/EC), due to sunset on 31 December 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to update the advice on NI Direct and to launch a targeted consultation on proposals to afford ex-GB/NI issued driving licence holders the same rights as other EEA licence holders on becoming resident again in NI.</p> <p>A decision was taken on the Department's response to the 2023-24 in year technical and budget information gathering exercise commissioned by the Department of Finance.</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish the Department for Infrastructure Business Plan for 2023-24 and the associated equality screening form.</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) Business Plan for 2023-24 and the associated equality screening form</p>
Department of Justice	<p>A decision was taken to publish a summary of consultation responses to the Police Pensions (Remediable Service) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 to achieve the retrospective elements of the McCloud remedy and to make The Police Pensions (Remediable Service) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023.</p> <p>A decision was taken to commence a process to fill a vacancy on the Board of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation</p> <p>A decision was taken to publish the Youth Justice Agency Business Plan for 2023-24</p> <p>A decision was taken to approve publication of a report by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland on the criminal justice system's approach to vulnerable older people.</p> <p>A decision was taken to increase the interest rates paid to clients and Court Funds Office (CFO) in Northern Ireland following the increase to the United Kingdom (UK) base rate announced on 3 August 2023</p> <p>A decision was taken to make regulations that will provide a legislative basis to allow personal information to be shared between the Public Prosecution Service's Victim and Witness Care Unit and Assist NI (a domestic and sexual abuse advocacy support service).</p> <p>A decision was taken to revoke the licences of two life licensees under Article 9(1) of the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001.</p> <p>A decision was taken not to take a position on a request from the Home Office on whether legislative proposals to tackle the use of machetes and other bladed articles in committing crime should be extended to Northern Ireland, in the absence of an Assembly and</p>

	<p>Executive.</p> <p>A decision was taken in May to publish the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) Annual Report and Threat Assessment 2021/2022.</p> <p>A decision was taken in June to issue a public consultation on proposals to update and reform the Access NI List of Specified Offences.</p>
Executive Office	<p>A decision was taken to defer a request from a member of the public to conduct a research visit to the Maze Long Kesh site.</p> <p>A decision was taken not to specify schools (where the employing school authority is neither the Education Authority nor the Council of Catholic Maintained Schools) as public authorities for the purposes of the monitoring arrangements under the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Act (NI) 2022 which extends the protection in FETO to teachers from May 2024. This decision will be kept under review in conjunction with Equality Commission Northern Ireland (ECNI) and Department of Education (DE).</p>