

Assembly Section

Craigantlet Buildings
Stormont
BT4 3SX
Tel No: 02890 163376
email: Judith.finlay@dfpni.gov.uk



Mr Shane McAteer
Clerk
Committee for Finance and Personnel
Room 419
Parliament Buildings
Stormont

Our Ref: CFP231/11-15

17 May 2013

Dear Shane,

FINANCIAL PROVISIONS BILL 2013

The Financial Provisions Bill is currently at draft stage with the Office of Legislative Council.

I have been advised that the main purpose of the Bill is to adjust statutory limits and to address other routine financial matters for departments. Departments have been asked to commission non-controversial items for inclusion in the Bill and a total of six items were considered suitable for inclusion. Instructions were forwarded to Counsel on 8 February 2013 to enable the drafting of the Bill. DFP is the lead Department on this occasion and officials in Central Finance Group (CFG) have advised that the following requirements for inclusion in the Bill have been identified:-

- to amend the Harbours Act (NI) to permit the Department to provide Grant in Aid to the NI Fishery Harbour Authority (DARD);
- to propose a statutory footing for both the Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust (PRRT) and the Northern Ireland Police Fund (NIPF) within part 9 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to establish the NIPF and PRRT as statutory bodies and enable DOJ to make regulations (DOJ);
- to amend the Judicature (Northern Ireland) Act 1978 to enable the Courts Fund Office interest rates to be adjusted by way of Ministerial Directions (DOJ);
- to amend Article 88 of the Housing (Northern Ireland) order 1981 to provide the Housing Executive with statutory power to charge for its administration and transaction costs associated with general

discretionary land transactions along similar lines to the provisions in section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 (DSD);

- to amend Article 4D (6)(b)(i) of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, replacing 'a body to which Article 90 of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 (NI 14) applies' with corresponding reference in the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009 (NIAO); and,
- to repeal the Development Loans (Agriculture and Fisheries) Act (Northern Ireland) 1968 in its entirety. (DARD)

Officials from CFG are available to brief the Committee on the policy implications of the Bill at their meeting on Wednesday 5 June. These proposals are then currently scheduled to be considered by the Executive on Thursday 6 June.

The policy memorandum, Bill and Explanatory and Financial Memorandum will be forwarded to the Committee after the Executive meeting. Following this, officials will make themselves available to the Committee for a pre-introduction briefing if required.

As outlined above, the provisions within the Bill will be a matter of interest for the Committees for Social Development, Justice, Agriculture, the Audit Committee and the Public Accounts Committee. I would be grateful if you could co-ordinate the comments of the other Committees and come back to me as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



JUDITH FINLAY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer