

From: The Minister

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Our ref: SUB/194/2015

10 March 2015



I am writing to update you on the budgetary position for 2015/16 and the amount to transfer to Local Government from 1 April 2016. You will be aware of the difficulties the Northern Ireland Executive has faced and the severity of the cuts that Executive Departments have had to agree. Within the context of this difficult budgetary position and following a stringent review of the programmes my Department provides and the services it supports, I have now arrived at what I consider to be the most appropriate financial solution for the 2015/16 year and for the budget to transfer in April 2016.

I appreciate you will be anxious to know about which projects my Department will be able to support in your area during 2015/16. I can only reassure you that my decisions take full recognition of the value of these projects and appreciation of the positive contribution they make to some of the most disadvantaged people in our society.

I know that you also have concerns about what reduction there will be in the amounts transferring to you for 2016/17. It is anticipated that the level of spending across my Department during 2015/16 for those services for which responsibility is transferring to Local Government will be in the region of £56.5m. Therefore the budget to transfer to Councils from 1 April 2016 will be £56.5m. I have previously declared my commitment to the Reform of Local Government and in recognition of that I have decided to protect the overall budget to transfer from any further cuts from April 2016.

In protecting this amount I have directed that any further potential cuts to my Departments overall budget from April 2016 will be absorbed by my Department. I attach the financial allocation model based on this figure which results in the amount of £2.058m transferring to Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

I hope that my decision will enable you to effectively plan for and deliver regeneration and community development across your areas, and of course my Officials and I are

committed to engaging with you and assisting you with your planning and decision making process.

When I have finalised decisions about the work programme for 2015/16 my Officials will inform the relevant stakeholders, including Councils. For my part I will continue to engage with Councillors and their Officials to allow meaningful discussion and to address areas of concern. This engagement process has proven useful thus far and I expect to have met with all remaining Councils in the coming weeks.

Going forward I fully expect the good relationships between my Department and Local Government to continue to develop particularly in the area of community planning which Councils are leading on. I have established a community planning group in my Department and Sharron Carlin, who will be your single point of contact for community planning, will contact you shortly to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can best work with you in this area.

I am copying this letter to the representative bodies of Council Chief Executives and Local Government representatives, SOLACE and NILGA, and to Ministers Durkan and Hamilton. I would be grateful if you would ensure Presiding Councillors and deputy Presiding Councillors are made aware of its content.

Yours sincerely



MERVYN STOREY MLA
Minister for Social Development

Allocations to Councils from April 2016

	Tackling Disadvantage Component			Physical Regeneration Component			Leganside	Community Development Component			Total Programme		Total Allocation		
	Income Deprived Population Settlement Bands A-G	% of total	Total	Total Population Settlement Bands A-G	% of total	Total		Average annual cost	Income Deprived Population of District	% of total	Indicative allocation (£,000)	% of total	Indicative allocation (£,000)	% of total	
Antrim and Newtownabbey	22,959	6.47%	1,538	113,820	8.73%	1,622		25,511	5.65%	334	6.91%	3,554	6.94%	3,319	6.94%
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	32,321	9.27%	2,205	127,658	9.75%	1,619		44,662	9.94%	654	9.17%	4,718	9.21%	5,201	9.21%
Belfast	114,141	32.16%	7,644	332,905	25.54%	4,745	2.112	114,361	25.33%	1,768	31.63%	16,269	31.96%	17,721	31.96%
Causeway Coast and Glens	23,546	6.63%	1,577	66,606	6.66%	1,237		35,125	7.76%	543	6.53%	3,357	6.55%	3,701	6.55%
Down	46,639	13.16%	3,127	116,067	8.90%	1,654		55,684	12.33%	861	10.97%	5,643	11.01%	6,221	11.01%
Fermanagh and Omagh	12,476	3.51%	836	42,688	3.27%	608		27,357	6.06%	423	3.63%	1,867	3.64%	2,069	3.64%
Lisburn and Castlereagh	16,352	4.67%	1,095	101,797	7.81%	1,451		19,406	4.30%	300	5.53%	2,846	5.55%	3,100	5.55%
Mid and East Antrim	20,737	5.84%	1,369	99,272	7.62%	1,415		25,001	5.54%	387	6.20%	3,190	6.23%	3,577	6.23%
Mid Ulster	15,423	4.34%	1,033	55,707	4.27%	794		30,323	7.57%	525	4.57%	2,351	4.59%	2,532	4.59%
Newry & Mourne and Down	26,753	7.54%	1,792	91,735	7.04%	1,307		44,655	9.85%	690	7.37%	3,790	7.40%	4,176	7.40%
North Down and Antrim	22,954	6.47%	1,537	135,007	10.36%	1,924		25,540	5.68%	395	7.50%	3,856	7.53%	4,252	7.53%
	354,960		23,772	1,303,462		18,577	2.112	451,447		6,980		51,441		56,500	