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**MEMORANDUM E (21) 023 (C)**

**FROM: CONOR MURPHY, MLA  
MINISTER OF FINANCE**

**TO: EXECUTIVE COLLEAGUES**

**DATE: 21 JANUARY 2021**

**FINAL EXECUTIVE PAPER: 2020-21 JANUARY MONITORING ROUND AND  
COVID FUNDING POSITION**

**Introduction**

This paper provides an update on the Covid funding position and seeks the Executive's agreement on allocations as part of the 2020-21 January Monitoring round.

**Background**

2. While the setting for this monitoring round is anything but normal, usual financial processes must take place. We must ensure in this final monitoring round of the year that all funds available are allocated to departments and spent to meet the pressures registered and to provide the required assistance to our citizens and businesses so that they can survive and be ready for economic recovery.
3. The final monitoring round of any year happens in line with the timetable for the 2020-21 Spring Supplementary Estimate process that will give the legislative authority to departments to spend the allocations they have received throughout the year. In view of the significant amounts allocated this year it is vital Spring Supplementary Estimates proceed through the Assembly in a timely way.
4. Access to underspends from any year under the Devolved Administration Budget Exchange Scheme are restricted to a capped level, it is therefore important that all resources available are allocated in a timely manner to enable expenditure to be correctly incurred thereby ensuring that any underspend is within the capped level.

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5. Following the October Monitoring Round all available resource funding had been allocated, Capital DEL was overcommitted by £12.7 million and £43.7 million Financial Transactions Capital remained available for allocation.
6. In line with the approach taken in previous monitoring rounds this paper will consider separately the Covid and non-Covid funding and bids.

### **COVID-19 Funding**

7. In terms of Covid funding following the allocations announced on 23 November and our decision on support for local airports the amounts held centrally are:

**Table 1: COVID-19 Funding Centrally Held**

£ million	Resource DEL
Held for Further Rates Support	£150.0
Held for DfE – Further Restriction Support Schemes	£60.0
Bus/Coach and Taxi Support	£6.0
Ferry Operators	£0.4
Held for Support in the event of Further Restrictions	£27.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 243.9</b>

### ***COVID-19 Treasury Funding***

8. We were advised just before Christmas that the Chief Secretary to the Treasury had increased the amount of COVID-19 funding guaranteed to the Executive in 2020-21 to £3.0 billion. This provides an additional £200 million Resource DEL for allocation. While it is still to be confirmed initial indications from the Treasury are that they will look favourably on any request to carry this funding forward to next year. Therefore this additional £200 million has not been included in the figures below.

### ***Restrictions Post Christmas***

9. The Executive took the decision on 17 December to increase restrictions from 26 December and as we all know we have since then made further difficult decisions

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as a result of increased Covid rates and pressures on our Health system. Before turning to specific new allocations in relation to these restrictions I will look at the overall funding available.

### ***Support for Business***

10. At the request of the Economy Minister the Executive agreed to hold centrally £60 million for allocation to schemes being developed to support the business sectors most impacted by restrictions. The Economy Minister provided an update to the Executive in November on the schemes being developed and her officials as part of this monitoring round have now confirmed that the full £60 million is required in this year. £10 million will go to the Tourism and Hospitality Scheme, £10 million to the Recently Self Employed scheme and £40 million to the Covid Restrictions Business Support Scheme. As the Executive had previously agreed this money be held for those schemes this funding is now transferred to DfE to be spent in this year.

### ***Support for Transport Sectors***

11. The Infrastructure Minister in October received £19 million in support for the Bus, Coach, Taxi and Haulage industries with a further £6 million held centrally at the request of the Infrastructure Minister. The Infrastructure Minister on 15 December, provided an update on the schemes, the Taxi Financial Assistance Scheme having opened on 13 November and ran for two weeks, The Private Coach and Bus Operator Financial Assistance Scheme opened on the day that scheme closed and closed on 18 December. The Infrastructure Minister has since brought forward a proposal to extend the support to Taxi drivers further in view of the new restrictions. I welcome this measure and have provided the £6 million of funding held for this purpose to DfI to be spent in this financial year.

### ***Further Rates Support***

12. The Executive previously agreed to hold centrally £150 million for further rates support in 2020-21 and to seek agreement from Treasury to carry this forward into 2020-21. Informal discussions with Treasury at official level have indicated that

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they are supportive of this and have suggested that we will be permitted to carry forward the £200 million of funding provided in December. This is sufficient to cover the cost of further rates support next year, and we are continuing to pursue the possibility of further carry forward and more on this is in para 48. I therefore propose that the £150 million centrally held is now made available for allocation along with other COVID funding.

### ***Rate Reliefs***

13. A number of necessary and significant COVID-19 response rate relief measures have been announced and all of these will impact on the level of Regional Rate income the Executive can expect in this year. Latest forecasts reflecting the new restrictions show that the cost of these reliefs is estimated to be £290.2 million. As a result £46.4 million of the Covid funding previously provided for rates relief measures will not now be required and is therefore made available for reallocation.

### ***Reduced Requirements***

14. As part of the January Monitoring round, departments have declared reduced requirements against previous COVID-19 allocations totalling £219.2 million Resource DEL and £10.5 million Financial Transactions Capital, details are provided in Annex A. This is a significant amount to be surrendered at this stage of the year and I will provide further detail.

15. Reduced requirements totalling £105.4 million Resource DEL have been declared by the Department for the Economy, the most significant of which is £93 million allocated for the High Street Support scheme, there is more on this below. Other significant easements are £3.1 million related to the incentives to support recruitment of new apprentices and £2.8 million from the additional Teaching Grant funding provided to Queens University and the University of Ulster

16. The Department for the Economy has also surrendered £10.5 million Financial Transactions Capital, £10 million of which relates to the Tourism NI Tourist Attraction Support scheme.

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17. The Department of Health has surrendered £90 million of the funding previously provided for the Covid response.
18. The Department of Education has surrendered a total of £15.7 million across a range of allocations. The most significant easement £ 8.1 million is from the allocation for PPE for schools restart and a total of £5.5 million in relation to previous allocations for free school meals.
19. The Department of Justice has surrendered £5.8 million, £4 million of which relates to funding provided to the PSNI for their Covid response, and £1.2 million from the allocation to the Prison Service.

### ***Replaced Covid Funding***

20. As a result of Covid there has been a need to account for more untaken annual leave that is usual. In view of those exceptional circumstances Treasury has now confirmed that it will provide the funding for this, there is more on this later. An earlier allocation of £65 million to the Department of Health, from Covid funding, for this purpose can now be made available for allocation.
21. An allocation for support to airports was made to the Department for Infrastructure in May 2020. This has been partially funded by the Department for Transport so £1.6 million can now be made available for allocation.
22. In total £66.6 million Covid funding previously allocated has now been replaced from other sources and can be directed to local support.

### ***High Street Support Scheme***

23. The High Street Support scheme, previously referred to as the High Street Voucher scheme, was intended to be launched in this financial year with cards to be used on our High Streets issued and activated by 31 March 2021. Issues with identifying data sources to allow the use of the card within the purpose of the scheme and the ongoing restrictions mean this is now not likely to be the case. While there will be some development and launch costs of around £2 million in this year the majority of the costs will fall into next year. If the scheme is launched in this year but cards

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are not issued and activated until after 31 March 2021 DfE has identified the funding requirements as:

- a. £140 million AME budget to recognise the future commitment once the scheme is launched;
- b. £2 million Resource DEL in 2020-21 for set up costs; and
- c. £142 million Resource DEL in 2021-22 as the cards are activated.

24. The Department for the Economy have asked for a commitment that this funding will be available in 2021-22 to progress the scheme. Colleagues will also note that the cost now notified is some £49 million higher than the previously agreed allocation of £95 million.

25. Given the funding available this year and the pressures we are facing this year I would urge the Economy Minister to consider if there is any action her department can take to allow these costs to be accounted for in this financial year.

26. Should this not be possible then the resultant pressure next year would need to be considered in the context of the Covid funding position set out in my Executive paper on the 2021-22 draft Budget position.

27. Colleagues will recall that the proposals in this paper left £126.9 million of Covid funding unallocated in light of the developing situation. When combined with the potential carry forward of the £200 million there should be £326.9 million of Covid funding available in 2021-22.

28. This would be sufficient to cover the £150m cost of further rates relief and the increased £142 million cost of the High Street Voucher Scheme.

29. However unless the costs of voucher scheme can be accrued this year, I would suggest that decision on funding it in 2021-22 is considered as part of our final Budget deliberations. This will allow DfE to provide more detail on the operation of the scheme and assurances that the scheme can be delivered quickly and will provide support to those businesses which require it. The Department for Communities is also seeking Covid money to administer Universal Credit payments

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and for labour market interventions to assist people who are out of work. DoF has also commissioned a short piece of work from Ulster University (UU) on how we might target future rate relief interventions. Colleagues will recall the earlier UU study which formed the basis for our decisions on the businesses to benefit from a rates holiday for this year. This current study is nearing completion and I suggest we consider the proposal for the voucher scheme alongside UU's deliberations and other Covid bids.

### ***Department for Economy Flexibility***

30. The Minister for Economy has asked for flexibility to reallocate unspent Covid funding for use on related areas to allow her department to react to the continually changing Covid landscape. The Executive provides allocations for specific purposes and if not required for those purposes then it is for the Executive to determine how the funding should be reallocated. However, there is value in making the best possible use of Covid monies and this year has been exceptional in the pace of developments and degree of uncertainty of schemes spending. Based on this I had asked the Minister for more detail on the actual level of flexibility proposed, the areas where underspends are predicted and the transparency on how this funding is now to be spent.

31. The Minister has now provided this detail and has asked that the remaining budget of £1.076 million in the Invest NI – SME Process and Organisational Grant and Invest NI Communication Campaigns is now reallocated to other areas providing Assistance to Business. There is also a further request to use the remaining £13.199 million from allocations made to Challenge Fund, Retain your Apprentice – Return, Retention, Result and Incentives to Support the Recruitment of New Apprenticeships to other areas related to Skills and Youth Training.

32. Although allocations are ring fenced to the specific bids, the flexibility being requested allows the department to maintain the Executive's intention to support pressure within the same business area where the original allocation was made. With the current constantly changing Covid landscape, we need to continue to meet the pressures of those most affected. With that in mind, I recommend that the Executive allows the DfE Minister to apply the flexibility requested and similar

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flexibility to reallocate money within these areas between now and the year end. The proposals would allow flexibility across common initiatives addressing similar areas of economic recovery and will reduce the risk of vital expenditure not being utilised.

### ***Department of Education Flexibility***

33. The Education Minister has similarly highlighted the fluid nature of the current situation and consequent challenge of projecting future budgetary requirements; he has therefore highlighted the need for pragmatism in the approach to COVID-19 funding requirements for the remainder of 2020-21.

34. DE has advised in the first instance that it wishes to repurpose c.£7.9 million Restart funding (that was intended to fund the increased costs of direct provision of free school meals (FSM) to pupils during pandemic arrangements) to provide payments to families in lieu of those FSM during term-time periods of school closures. I recommend the Executive agrees to this minor revision of funding usage.

35. DE has declared easements of £8.1 million, £4.1 million, and £2.8 million across three of its spend areas: "Restart – PPE", "COVID Response", and "COVID Restart" respectively. "COVID Response" refers to the emergency expenditure during periods of restrictions such as school closures, and incorporates elements such as increasing FSM costs and School Uniform Grants as a result of pandemic-related increases in Universal Credit claimants. In essence, this may be considered as expenditure on school closures and acute effects of the pandemic. "COVID Restart" refers to expenditure to enable the safe reopening of schools, and expenditure associated with maintaining that safe environment during the academic year.

36. DE has not surrendered its full PPE or Response easements, instead holding £3 million and £2.3 million as a contingency (with a further £2.1 million in Response contingency from DE's baseline) – these are the areas DE believes are most likely to see increases in costs compared to current forecasts. A further potential area

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for costs to increase is in Restart; where the costs fall is highly dependent on whether further restrictions are required before 31 March.

37. I therefore recommend to the Executive that flexibility is granted between the three spend areas of “COVID Response,” “COVID Restart,” and “Restart – PPE”. This would allow the Education Minister to ensure the needs of schools and pupils continue to be met whether the schools reopen as presently planned or face further closures. Such flexibility would reduce the risk of underspend and would help ensure all spend is effective.

### ***COVID-19 Available Funding***

38. This brings the total COVID-19 funding available for allocation to £509.8 million Resource DEL. While the table below shows Financial Transactions Capital available as a result of a previous COVID-19 allocation being returned this was not provided by Treasury in relation to Covid support. Given the specialised nature of this funding and that it was funded by the Executive it has been included in the funding available under the normal January Monitoring process noted below.

**Table 2: COVID-19 – Available Resources**

£ million	Resource DEL	FT Capital DEL
<b>For Support in the event of Further Restrictions</b>	<b>£27.5</b>	<b>£0.0</b>
Replaced Covid Funding	£66.6	
COVID-19 Reduced Requirements (Annex A )	£219.2	£10.5
Further Rates Support	£150.0	
Rate Relief Easement	£46.4	
Moved to January Monitoring Table 5	-	-£10.5

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COVID-19 Resources Available	£509.8	£0.0
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### January Monitoring Covid-19 Bids

39. Departments submitted a range of COVID-19 bids as part of January Monitoring.

While these bids have been submitted with the increased restrictions in place since 26 December factored in, I asked all Executive colleagues to consider what further support is needed in view of our more recent decisions.

40. While responses have been received from some Ministers there has not been a significant increase in the amount of funding requested at this time. Those new bids that relate to Covid are noted have been included in Annex C, while those more appropriate for January Monitoring are referred to in that section below. Bids totalling £215.6 million Resource DEL are therefore being considered at this time.

41. I again ask Executive colleagues to consider what further support can be provided and in particular I ask that colleagues consider what support can be provided to those sectors or individuals that so far have not received support e.g. travel agents, hauliers, conference and event organisers etc. and to bring forward proposals as soon as possible.

42. It is important to remember that the funding this paper deals with has been received to respond to COVID-19 in this financial year. While we can look forward towards economic recovery we must at this point consider measures that will provide the much needed immediate support for businesses to survive these restrictions to ensure we have an economy to recover. I therefore ask that you ensure that any bid is for funding demonstrates that the funding provided can be spent in this financial year.

43. While further proposals are developed within departments in light of the new restrictions, given the level of funding available and the late stage of the financial year I am proposing that all the bids currently submitted are met in full. This includes the following allocations.

### Proposed COVID-19 Allocations

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### **Department for the Economy**

44. The Department for the Economy has submitted bids totalling £94.5 million for a range of measures to support to Business, Tourism and Further and Higher education. I propose allocating £44.7 million to the Department for the Economy for the Assistance to Tourism, Business Support Scheme, The Small Business and Hospitality Schemes, Company Directors, Catalyst Projects and the Tourism and Hospitality Scheme. I also propose allocating £23.2 million in relation to Research and Development both to replace lost income and in relation to grant schemes. I also propose allocating £26.5 million to replace the European Social Fund funding in view of the serious implications for the department of losing this funding and for ESF Apprenticeships. Taken with the £60 million previously held centrally that is over £154 million additional funding provided to the Economy Minister for much needed support to individuals and business in this financial year.

### **Department of Education**

45. The Department of Education has submitted £7.5 million of bids covering a range of pressures associated with restarting schools and pressures arising in response to COVID-19, across a range of education provision. The Education Minister in his response to my letter of 7 January noted the issue of teachers pay, but as any bid in this year is conditional on future years funding being provided this has not been considered in this paper. I propose to allocate £4.6 million to enable the department to continue to respond to the challenges of educating through COVID-19 and £2.0 million towards the restart pressures to cover additional staff costs, additional cleaning and maintaining a safe environment, resources for blended learning and support for childcare. I also propose allocating £0.9 million to enable the department to fund the Lost Learning Programme, Entitlement Framework and St John Baptist Contingency.

### **Department of Finance**

46. The Department of Finance has submitted bids for £101.6 million. I propose allocating £100.0 million to continue the Financial Assistance scheme in view of the new restrictions. As with all support provided by the Executive this may need to be reviewed should restrictions be further extended. An allocation of £0.6 million

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will provide rates relief to the newspaper media sector. A further allocation for £1 million will enable desktop computers to be disposed of as the civil service moves to remote working on laptops.

### Department for Infrastructure

47. The Department for Infrastructure submitted bids totalling £12.1 million due to a loss of income across a range of sectors, the most significant of which is being experienced within the Driver Vehicle Agency and for increased cost of PPE. I propose allocating £11.9 million to the Department for Infrastructure to help alleviate the pressures as a result of lost income, and £0.2 million for the cost of PPE in the Driver and Vehicle Agency.

48. Table 3 below summarises the COVID-19 Funding position following the allocations noted above. The decisions taken on COVID allocations makes use of the funding available while also holding £200 million centrally. I have written to the Treasury jointly with my devolved counterparts in Scotland and Wales seeking agreement to greater flexibility to carry forward Covid funding received earlier in the year recognising the exceptional circumstances we are in. However, I would suggest we work on the basis that carry forward will be limited to £200 million. I will of course advise colleagues immediately I hear back from the Treasury.

**Table 3: COVID-19 Outcome - Summary**

£ million	Resource DEL	FT Capital DEL
Resources Available (Table 2)	£509.8	-
Proposed COVID-19 Allocations (Annex F)	-£215.6	-
<b>COVID-19 Funding Remaining</b>	<b>£294.2</b>	-

*Totals may not add due to roundings*

### 2020-21 January Monitoring – Non COVID changes

#### Central Issues

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49. A number of central issues have arisen that impact on the level of available resources. These issues are detailed below.

### ***Budget Exchange Scheme – Final Outturn***

50. The Budget Exchange Scheme allows the Executive to carry forward and draw down end of year underspends up to a limit agreed with HM Treasury. The 2019-20 Provisional Outturn position indicated that we would benefit from last year's underspend by £28.4 million Resource DEL and £21.2 million Capital DEL in this financial year under the Budget Exchange Scheme. This assumption was factored into the June Monitoring round.

51. The Budget Exchange Scheme requires the Devolved Administrations to then adjust draw down to the Final Outturn position. This only recently became available and shows that there was an additional Resource DEL underspend in 2019-20 at Block level of £4.2 million whilst on Capital DEL the underspend increased from £101.6 million to £102.3 million.

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52. The additional Resource DEL of £4.2 million will now be made available in this monitoring round, whilst the additional Capital DEL underspend will not impact on resources available in this round, the Budget Exchange cap having already been reached and included in June.

53. When advising of the 2019-20 Provisional Outturn position alongside June Monitoring I had previously advised that I was in discussion with the Treasury on additional flexibility for underspend related to the COVID-19 situation. While those discussions have been ongoing and I have again raised the issue with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury no additional flexibility has been forthcoming.

### ***Regional Rate Income***

54. The change in the forecast Regional Rates income provided for this round, not attributed to COVID-19, is an increase of £10.3 million which is now available for reallocation in this monitoring round.

### ***Fresh Start Agreement***

55. Fresh Start Agreement funding for Tackling Paramilitary Activity is provided by Treasury and the Executive in equal quantity and the Budget 2020-21 set aside funding for that purpose. Forecasts of expenditure now indicate that £0.4 million of the Resource DEL set aside will not be required in this year and can be made available for reallocation by the Executive in this monitoring round.

56. The 2020-21 Budget outcome provided £19.1 million to the Department of Education for shared education and £16.9 million to the Department for Communities for shared housing. In total through In-year Monitoring the Department of Education have surrendered £12 million of the Shared Education funding primarily due to delays as a result of COVID-19. This reduced requirement is not shown in Annex B as is not available for reallocation, instead the amount confirmed with Treasury in November, and drawn down this year, is based upon actual need for this funding.

57. All Shared Future funding was allocated to departments at the conclusion of the October Monitoring Round. Changes to this funding, as advised by The Executive

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Office as part of January monitoring, are set out below. There is no impact on available resources as a result of these changes.

Department		£m
DE	T:BUC Camps	-0.1
TEO	District Councils Good Relations	0.1
TEO	Urban Villages - Schools of Sanctuary & Creative Schools	-0.1
DE	Urban Villages - Schools of Sanctuary & Creative Schools	0.1

### ***Delivering Social Change/Atlantic Philanthropies***

58.£2.0 million Capital DEL set aside for Delivering Social Change remains unallocated. The Executive Office has confirmed that this is not required by the programme this year and can therefore be made available for reallocation by the Executive in this round.

59.Changes to previous allocations have been confirmed by The Executive Office as part of January Monitoring as set out below, the sums returned are available for allocation in this round.

Department		£m
TEO	Social Investment Fund – Resource Grants	-£0.1
TEO	Social Investment Fund – Capital Grants	-£0.3

### ***EU Match Funding***

60.Departments, in conjunction with European Division in my department, at each monitoring round assess the need for match funding required to draw down EU Funds. The assessment completed for October Monitoring has resulted in £2.2 million Resource DEL and £1.0 million Capital DEL being made available for reallocation.

### ***Statutory Salaries***

61.Under legislation, the salaries of statutory office holders are met directly from the NI Consolidated Fund (NICF). This includes the NI Public Service Ombudsman, the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Lands Tribunal and Judicial salaries. However, the salary costs also show in the relative departments Resource DEL

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budget but as they are a direct charge on the NICF these costs are funded centrally. The latest estimate indicates that £0.015 million will not be required and is therefore available for reallocation in this monitoring round.

### ***Impact of Centrally Held Items***

62. In total, taking into account the central issues noted above, and a small cash management rebate notified by Treasury, £17.2 million of Resource DEL, and £43.7 million Financial Transactions Capital DEL is available for allocation, while a £9.3 million Capital DEL overcommitment remains. This is before departmental reduced requirements have been factored in.

**Table 4: January Monitoring – Available Resources - Starting Position**

<b>£ million</b>	<b>Resource DEL</b>	<b>Capital DEL</b>	<b>FT Capital DEL</b>
<b>October Monitoring Outcome Available (+) / Overcommitment (-)</b>	<b>£0.0</b>	<b>-£12.7</b>	<b>£43.7</b>
2019-20 Additional Underspend	£4.2		
Regional Rates	£10.3		
HMT Cash Management Rebate	£0.1		
EU Match Funding	£2.2	£1.0	
Fresh Start – Tackling Paramilitary Activity	£0.4		
Statutory Salaries	£0.0		
Delivering Social Change	£0.1	£2.4	
<b>January Monitoring Starting Position Resources Available</b>	<b>£17.2</b>	<b>-£9.3</b>	<b>£43.7</b>

*Totals may not add due to roundings*

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### Reduced Requirements

63. Departments have identified non-COVID-19 reduced requirements in this monitoring round of £93.9 million Resource DEL and £55.7 million Capital DEL and £1.5 million Financial Transactions Capital DEL. Full details are provided at Annex B.

64. On Resource DEL most significant reduced requirements include £23.0 million declared by the Department of Health, £10.9 million from the Department of Finance reflecting the anticipated return of rate relief funding from large supermarkets, £8.0 million declared by the Department for Communities as a result of Housing Benefit for tenants being lower than forecast and £3.5 million due to delays in recruiting staff for Universal Credit due to Covid. The Executive Office has surrendered £8.3 million in relation funding for Historical Institutional Abuse and a total of £9.5 million has been returned by the Department for Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs and the Food Standards Agency in relation to the Executive funds provided to give certainty ahead of Treasury providing funding related to the NI Protocol. The Department of Education has surrendered £16.1 million in relation to the Education End year Flexibility scheme, a mechanism to facilitate local management of schools budgets, this funding will be required in future years.

65. On Capital DEL the majority of the reduced requirements are as a result of project delays but also reflect some additional receipts. I will provide some detail on the most significant individual easements. The Department of Health has surrendered £19 million as a result of delays in ICT projects and the Department for the Economy a reduced requirement has arisen as a result of a £7.8 million repayment of the loan to the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

66. On Financial Transactions Capital DEL the reduced requirement declared by the Department for the Economy relates to reduced demand for Invest NI Growth Loan Fund and Seed Fund loans.

### Reclassifications

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67. The budgeting framework allows reclassifications of expenditure from Resource DEL to Capital DEL (opposite movements can only be recommended if there is scope to do so without breaching Treasury controls). There may be some departmental allocations which, for technical reasons, were incorrectly classified as part of the Budget process. Departments may also propose reclassifications as part of proactive management actions. All such reclassifications require the Executive's approval. Annex D sets out the reclassifications, along with the impact of movements within the Resource DEL boundary, which I recommend for approval.

### **Technical Issues**

68. Before turning to the substantive issues of this round I want to take the opportunity to update you on some issues that are being discussed with the Treasury.

69. I formally requested the funding advised by departments as required in 2020-21 as a result of applying the Expected Credit Loss required under IFRS 9 and in relation to Accrued Annual Leave. Treasury has agreed to provide the additional funding required. As such the Executive will not consider bids submitted by departments for these costs.

70. Treasury has also agreed to an amended profile of expenditure for Confidence and Supply funding for Broadband. An additional £6.1 million Capital DEL in 2020-21 will be drawn down for Project Stratum and I confirmed this in my letter to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury in November 2020.

### **NI Protocol**

71. Agreement has been reached in relation to a total of £30.3 million funding for the costs that will be incurred implementing the NI Protocol, this represents a reduction of the amount previously requested from Treasury in light of departments refining their need for additional funding.

### **Resources Available**

72. All of the above issues impact on the amount of resources available to the Executive in this monitoring round. Table 5 below summarises the position.

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**Table 5: January Monitoring Resources Available**

£ million	Resource DEL	Capital DEL	FT Capital DEL
<b>January Monitoring Starting Position (Table 4)</b>	<b>£17.2</b>	<b>-£9.3</b>	<b>£43.7</b>
Reduced Requirements (Annex B )	£93.9	£55.7	£1.5
COVID-19 Reduced Requirement from Table 2			£10.5
Classification Switches (Annex D)	-£0.4	-£0.0	
<b>Resources Available (+) / Overcommitment (-)</b>	<b>£110.7</b>	<b>£46.4</b>	<b>£55.7</b>

*Totals may not add due to roundings*

### ***January Monitoring Bids***

73. The responses to my letter included proposals which could assist budget management in future years, if considered now in light of the funding available. Taking those into consideration departments have submitted bids totalling £98.2 million Resource, £24.2 million Capital, FTC is dealt with separately below. Details of these bids are set out in Annex E. As noted above where bids submitted relate to funding provided by Treasury in relation to expected credit loss, accrued annual leave and Project Stratum, these have not been considered for allocation from Executive funds. Removing these brings the total departments bids being considered to £58.4 million Resource DEL and £18.1 million Capital DEL.

### ***Re-prioritisation***

74. I previously said that departments would again be given the flexibility in this round to re-prioritise their own budgets in response to the added pressures faced this year. All departments have taken the opportunity to do so.

75. Given the flexibilities, I have committed to provide transparency on overall departmental Budgets by Spending Area. Officials will agree the outcome at Spending Area with each department and these tables will be provided alongside the Statement to the Assembly

### **Proposed January Monitoring Allocations**

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### ***Resource DEL – Allocations***

76. It is disappointing that such a significant sum has been surrendered at this late stage of the year. Given the level of funding available I propose allocations to department for all bids submitted totalling £58.4 million Resource DEL as listed in Annex G. I also again ask colleagues to consider any further bids that can be submitted in this year, especially where spend in this year could help alleviate pressures next year. Further information on the proposed allocations is set out below.

### **Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs**

77. DAERA has bid for £3.5 million in relation to Financial Discipline reimbursement due from the EU, while this funding is expected to be provided via a transfer from outside of Northern Ireland there is some uncertainty on the mechanism for this. While discussions are ongoing DAERA need to make payments to farmers. I propose that £3.5 million is allocated to DAERA to provide the certainty they need now, when the funding mechanism is settled and monies received this will revert back to the Executive at that time.

### **Department for the Economy**

78. DfE has bid for £42.0 million of pressures in this monitoring round £32.3 million of which is covered by Treasury provided funds. I propose that £9.7 million is allocated to the Department for the Economy for Higher Education Quality Research and FE Colleges Pay remit.

### **Department for Infrastructure**

79. DfI has bid for £10 million to reimburse the Driver Vehicle Agency for reserve funding it provided to the Executive in 2008-09, thereby improving resilience through these difficult times. DfI has also noted a £35 million bid for Translink which will put the company on a more solid footing for the future. Both of these proposals have been put forward in light of the funding available in this year and to help ease pressures and facilitate better budget management in future years, I therefore propose allocating £10 million for DVA and £35 million for Translink.

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### **Public Prosecution Service**

80. The Public Prosecution Service submitted bids totalling £0.8 million, £0.5 million of which is covered by Treasury provided funds. I propose allocating £0.3 million to PPS for increased dilapidation costs.

### ***Capital DEL***

81. I am proposing to meet the Department of Education bid for £18.1 million for costs of providing ICT to the Education Authority and carrying out minor capital works across the Education sector.

82. The Department for the Economy has submitted a bid related to Project Stratum, as this funding is being provided by Treasury I do not propose allocating Executive funds at this time.

### ***Financial Transactions Capital DEL***

83. While The Executive Office has submitted a small bid related to capitalised interest, which I propose meeting, there have been no substantive bids from departments for Financial Transactions Capital in this round. It is disappointing that this funding will again be lost to the Executive.

### ***Ring-fenced Resource DEL***

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84. Ring-fenced Resource DEL is strictly controlled by Treasury and funding cannot be moved out of this area. Under the Budget Exchange scheme the Executive has accessed all funding available as a result of 2019-20 underspend in this area. Changes to this area are shown in Annex H. Easements totalling £11.1 million have been declared by, the most significant of which were by Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Department of Health and the Department for Communities. Allocations have been made to the Department of Education £0.1 million and £6.1 million to the Department for the Economy for increased depreciation costs in the Further Education Sector and £0.2 million to Public Prosecution Service.

85. At the conclusion of the October Monitoring round £38.8 million remained unallocated in relation to ring-fenced Student Loan Impairment. The Department

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for the Economy has received information allowing them to determine the final requirement for this funding in 2020-21. The overall requirement has increased significantly and the funding held centrally will be allocated to the Department for the Economy in this round. In line with usual practice a reserve claim for the amount needed in excess of budget, £93.1 million, has been submitted to the Treasury. The outcome of these changes is also included in Annex H.

### **January Monitoring Outcome**

86. Table 6 below summarises the position on non-Covid funding following the January Monitoring round. As a result of the proposed allocations detailed above we exit this monitoring round with £52.2 million Resource DEL, £28.3 million of Capital DEL and £55.7 million of Financial Transactions Capital unallocated.

**Table 6: January Monitoring Outcome - Summary**

£ million	Resource DEL	Capital DEL	FT Capital DEL
Resources Available (Table 5)	£110.7	£46.4	£55.7
Proposed Allocations (Annex G)	-£58.4	-£18.1	-£0.0
<b>January Monitoring Outcome – Available Funds</b>	<b>£52.2</b>	<b>£28.3</b>	<b>£55.7</b>

*Totals may not add due to roundings*

### **Conclusion**

87. It is important to highlight the significant sums of Covid and Non-Covid funding unallocated at the conclusion of this round. This funding if not allocated and spent in this year will be lost to the Executive.

88. This paper has been brought to the Executive now in view of the urgent need to agree these allocations, provide certainty to those who have bid and to inform the Spring Supplementary Estimate position.

89. However, I reiterate the need for colleagues to urgently consider ways to utilise the funding available in this year. Proposals should be brought forward to my department as soon as possible and as with our dynamic approach to Covid

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allocations this year I will then bring forward further papers to the Executive through the remaining months of this financial year. While the funding has been identified as either Covid or non-Covid funding, depending on its source, in reality the total available to the Executive can be used for either purpose. Therefore departments should not limit proposals for additional spending to the amounts provided from that source. The important thing is to spend the money available in the best way possible and avoid unspent funding being returned to Treasury.

90.If any department feels their Spring Supplementary Estimate position should include headroom for an imminent proposal they should engage with their Supply Team.

### **Statement to the Assembly on 2020-21 January Monitoring**

91.Following Executive agreement on the 2020-21 January Monitoring Round I will make a Statement to the Assembly. I would ask that colleagues do not disseminate the outcome of these exercises outside the Executive until the Statement has been provided to the Assembly.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

92.In light of the above, I recommend that the Executive:

- a) **notes the level of COVID-19 funding available;**
- b) **agrees that funding held centrally now be made available for Covid response;**
- c) **agrees the proposed COVID-19 allocations at Annex F;**
- d) **agrees that the Economy and Education Ministers be provided with additional flexibility to reallocate COVID allocations as described above;**

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- e) notes the update in relation to the Fresh Start agreement, ongoing Treasury engagement and the Central Issues;
- f) notes the level of reduced requirements (Annexes A and B);
- g) notes the amount surrendered under the Education EYF scheme and the need to provide this funding in future years;
- h) agrees the proposed reclassifications (Annex D);
- i) agrees the proposed January Monitoring allocations (Annex G);
- j) agrees to urgently bring forward further proposals to utilise the available COVID and non-COVID funding;
- k) notes that the January Monitoring round concludes with £294.2 million Resource DEL COVID funding unallocated and a further £52.2 million Resource DEL, £28.3 million Capital DEL and £55.7 million Financial Transactions Capital of non-Covid funding still available; and
- l) notes the need to ensure no public comment is made on the outcome of this Monitoring Round until the statement has been made to the Assembly.

**CONOR MURPHY MLA  
MINISTER OF FINANCE**

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<b>Annex B</b>	<b>Reduced Requirements</b>
<b>Annex C</b>	<b>COVID-19 Bids</b>
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<b>Annex I</b>	<b>Administration Costs</b>

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ANNEX A

JANUARY Monitoring COVID Reduced Requirements (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource	FT Capital
DfC	Discretionary Support Grant	-2.0	
	Homelessness	-0.3	
<b>TOTAL DfC</b>		<b>-2.3</b>	
DfE	Air Access	-1.2	
	Apprenticeship Incentives	-0.5	
	Assistance to Tourism	-0.3	
	Holidays at Home Vouchers	-2.0	
	Hydrogen Economy	-1.0	
	Apprenticeships	-3.1	
	Invest NI - Assistance to Business	-93.0	
	Invest NI - Early Stage Companies		-0.5
	Retain your Apprentice	-0.9	
	Skills & Youth Training	-0.6	
	Teaching Grant QUB/UU	-2.8	
	Tourism NI - Game of Thrones		-10.0
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>-105.4</b>	<b>-10.5</b>
DE	Response - Education Authority	-0.2	
	Response - Children & Learning	-0.3	
	Response - Free School Meals	-2.8	
	Response - Lost Income	-0.1	
	Response - Pathway Fund	-0.1	
	Response - School Meals Loss of Income	-0.1	
	Response - Schools Maintenance	-0.2	
	Restart - Free School Meals	-2.7	
	Restart - Grounds Maintenance	-1.1	
	Restart - PPE	-8.1	
<b>TOTAL DE</b>		<b>-15.7</b>	
DoH	Health Support Services	-47.9	
	Hospital Services	-42.1	
	Ophthalmic Services	-0.0	
	Social Care Services	-0.0	
<b>TOTAL DoH</b>		<b>-90.0</b>	
DOJ	Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Services	-0.5	
	Police Service Northern Ireland	-4.0	
	Prison Service	-1.2	
	Safer Communities	-0.1	
<b>TOTAL DOJ</b>		<b>-5.8</b>	
<b>TOTAL COVID REDUCED REQUIREMENTS</b>		<b>-219.2</b>	<b>-10.5</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

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ANNEX B

JANUARY Monitoring Reduced Requirements (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource	Capital	FT Capital
DAERA	EU Exit	-6.9		
DfC	Casement Park Capital IT CFER		-2.7	
	Casement Park Redevelopment		-1.7	
	Housing Benefit Rates Rebates	-8.0		
	HMO database costs	-0.0		
	Housing Association receipts		-2.6	
	Information Technology		-3.6	
	Local Government Boundary Commission	-0.2		
	Local Government Services De-Rating Grant	-2.1		
	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Voluntary Exit Scheme	-0.1		
	Recruitment Delays	-3.5		
<b>TOTAL DfC</b>		<b>-13.9</b>	<b>-10.5</b>	
DfE	EU Exit	-1.5		
	Insolvency Service CFERS	-0.1		
	Invest NI - FTC - Growth Loan Fund			-1.2
	Invest NI - FTC - Seed Fund			-0.4
	PMS - Capital Receipts		-7.8	
	Small Business Research Initiative		-0.2	
	Tourism Development		-1.0	
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>-1.7</b>	<b>-9.1</b>	<b>-1.5</b>
DE	Excess GMI Capital Receipts		-0.3	
	Excess VGS Capital Receipts		-1.0	
	Schools' Surpluses	-16.2		
<b>TOTAL DE</b>		<b>-16.2</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	
DoF	Accommodation	-1.7		
	Bad debt	-0.3		
	CENSUS	-1.3		
	Change controls		-0.1	
	Consultancy	-0.1		
	Digital Transformation Service Contact Centre	-0.9		
	EU Exit	-0.1		
	ITAssist Contract	-0.8		
	Project delays		-1.7	
	Rate relief refund	-10.9		
	Vacancies	-1.2		
<b>TOTAL DoF</b>		<b>-17.2</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	
DoH	Agenda for Change Pay	-0.7		
	Bright Start Approved Home Childcare (DSC)	-0.1		
	Business Service Organisation - ICT		-19.1	
	GovTech		-0.1	

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	Health and Social Care Services	-23.0		
	Northern Ireland Ambulance Service		-1.5	
	Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service		-0.2	
	Trusts ICT		-4.1	
<b>TOTAL DoH</b>		<b>-23.8</b>	<b>-25.0</b>	
DfI	A5 Western Transport Corridor		-1.5	
	DVA Capital Grant		-1.0	
	Planning		-0.6	
	Roads CFER	-0.3		
	TENS Income		-0.1	
	TENS receipts		-0.1	
	Trust Port Loan		-1.0	
<b>TOTAL DfI</b>		<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-4.2</b>	
DOJ	Access to Justice		-0.1	
	EU Exit	-0.3		
	Legal Services Agency		-0.0	
	Northern Ireland Prison Service		-1.5	
	Police Service Northern Ireland		-0.7	
	Police Ombudsman		-0.3	
	Safer Communities		-0.8	
	Youth Justice Agency		-0.0	
<b>TOTAL DOJ</b>		<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-3.4</b>	
TEO	Administration	-0.6		
	Community Relations Council	-0.0		
	Historical Institutional Abuse	-7.0	-0.2	
	Historical Institutional Abuse Redress	-1.3		
	Population Survey 20-21	-0.0		
	Recruitment delays	-0.8		
	Renewable Heat Incentive	-0.1		
<b>TOTAL TEO</b>		<b>-9.9</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	
FSA	Return of Executive NI Protocol funding	-2.6		
NIA	CFER Receipts	-0.0		
	Recruitment delays	-0.9	-0.1	
<b>TOTAL NIA</b>		<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	
NIAO	Administration	-0.1		
NIAUR	Administration		-0.0	
	Renewables Buy Out Fund	-0.0		
<b>TOTAL NIAUR</b>		<b>-0.0</b>	<b>-0.0</b>	
NIPSO	Recruitment delays	-0.1		
	Delay in Capital Projects		-0.0	
<b>TOTAL NIPSO</b>		<b>-0.1</b>	<b>-0.0</b>	
<b>TOTAL REDUCED REQUIREMENTS</b>		<b>-93.9</b>	<b>-55.7</b>	<b>-1.5</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

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## JANUARY Monitoring COVID BIDs Submitted (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource
DfE	Assistance to Tourism	5.0
	Business Support Scheme	7.0
	Catalyst Projects	0.6
	Company Directors	20.0
	Displacement of European Social Fund (ESF) Funding	18.7
	ESF Apprenticeships	7.8
	Loss of Commercial Research Income	7.2
	R&D Scheme Grant	16.0
	Small Business Grant & Hospitality Schemes	1.1
	Tourism & Hospitality Scheme	11.1
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>94.5</b>
DE	Response - Educating through COVID-19	4.6
	Response - Entitlement Framework	0.4
	Response - Lost Learning Programme	0.3
	Response - St John Baptist Contingency	0.2
	Restart - Schools	2.0
<b>TOTAL DE</b>		<b>7.5</b>
DoF	Desktop Disposals	1.0
	Financial Assistance	100.0
	Newspaper Rate Relief	0.6
<b>TOTAL DoF</b>		<b>101.6</b>
DfI	DVA Lost Income	10.0
	DVA PPE	0.2
	Roads Lost Income	1.9
<b>TOTAL DfI</b>		<b>12.1</b>
<b>TOTAL COVID BIDS SUBMITTED</b>		<b>215.6</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

## JANUARY Monitoring Reclassifications (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource	Capital
PPS	IT Costs	-0.0	0.0
Movements between Ring Fenced and Non Ring Fenced Resource DEL reflected in Annex H		0.4	
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED RECLASSIFICATIONS</b>		<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>

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ANNEX E

JANUARY Monitoring Non-COVID BIDs Submitted (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource	Capital	Financial Transactions Capital
DAERA	Financial Discipline Reimbursement due from EU	3.5		
DfE	Annual Leave Accrual	1.1		
	FE Colleges Pay Remit	1.6		
	Higher Education Quality Research	8.1		
	Invest NI Expected Credit Loss	12.7		
	Presbyterian Mutual Society Expected Credit Loss	18.5		
	Project Stratum		6.1	
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>42.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>	
DE	Annual Leave Accrual	4.3		
	Education Authority - ICT		3.0	
	Education Authority - Minor Works		9.0	
	Voluntary Maintained Schools - Minor Works		4.8	
	Voluntary Maintained Schools - Minor Works - Primary		1.3	
<b>TOTAL DE</b>		<b>4.3</b>	<b>18.1</b>	
DfI	Annual Leave Accrual	2.6		
	DVA Reinstatement of Reserves	10.0		
	Translink	35.0		
<b>TOTAL DFI</b>		<b>47.6</b>		
PPS	Annual Leave Accrual	0.5		
	Dilapidation Costs	0.3		
<b>TOTAL PPS</b>		<b>0.8</b>		
TEO	Annual Leave Accrual	0.0		
	Capitalised FTC Loan Interest			0.0
<b>TOTAL TEO</b>		<b>0.0</b>		<b>0.0</b>
<b>TOTAL BIDS SUBMITTED</b>		<b>98.2</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

## January Monitoring COVID-19 Proposed Allocations (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource
DfE	Assistance to Tourism	5.0
	Business Support Scheme	7.0
	Catalyst Projects	0.6
	Company Directors	20.0
	Displacement of European Social Fund (ESF) Funding	18.7
	ESF Apprenticeships	7.8
	Loss of Commercial Research Income	7.2
	R&D Scheme Grant	16.0
	Small Business Grant & Hospitality Schemes	1.1
	Tourism & Hospitality Scheme	11.1
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>94.5</b>
DE	Response - Educating through COVID-19	4.6
	Response - Entitlement Framework	0.4
	Response - Lost Learning Programme	0.3
	Response - St John Baptist Contingency	0.2
	Restart - Schools	2.0
<b>TOTAL DE</b>		<b>7.5</b>
DoF	Desktop Disposals	1.0
	Financial Assistance	100.0
	Newspaper Rate Relief	0.6
<b>TOTAL DoF</b>		<b>101.6</b>
DfI	DVA Lost Income	10.0
	DVA PPE	0.2
	Roads Lost Income	1.9
<b>TOTAL DfI</b>		<b>12.1</b>
<b>TOTAL Proposed COVID-19 Allocations</b>		<b>215.6</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

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## ANNEX G

## JANUARY Monitoring Proposed Allocations (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	Non Ring Fenced Resource	Capital	Financial Transactions Capital
DAERA	Financial Discipline Reimbursement due from EU	3.5		
DfE	FE Colleges Pay Remit	1.6		
	Higher Education Quality Research	8.1		
<b>TOTAL DfE</b>		<b>9.7</b>		
DE	Education Authority - ICT		3.0	
	Education Authority - Minor Works		9.0	
	Voluntary Maintained Schools - Minor Works		4.8	
	Voluntary Maintained Schools - Minor Works - Primary		1.3	
<b>TOTAL DE</b>			<b>18.1</b>	
DfI	DVA Reinstatement of Reserves	10.0		
	Translink	35.0		
<b>TOTAL DfI</b>		<b>45.0</b>		
PPS	Dilapidation Costs	0.3		
TEO	Capitalised FTC Loan Interest			0.0
<b>TOTAL Proposed Allocations</b>		<b>58.4</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Total may not add due to roundings

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## 2020-21 Ring-Fenced Resource DEL (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	OCTOBER MONITORING POSITION	CHANGES	JANUARY MONITORING POSITION
DAERA	25.3	-5.0	20.4
DfC	12.4	-1.1	11.4
DfE	117.9	139.2	257.0
DE	0.9	0.1	0.9
DoF	36.4	-0.0	36.3
DoH	158.4	-5.0	153.4
DfI	116.2	0.0	116.2
DOJ	76.9	0.0	76.9
TEO	1.2	-0.4	0.8
FSA	0.1	0.0	0.1
NIA	3.3	-0.5	3.3
NIAO	0.2	-0.0	0.1
NIAUR	0.1	-0.0	0.0
NIPSO	0.1	-0.0	0.1
PPS	2.0	0.2	2.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>551.1</b>	<b>127.9</b>	<b>679.0</b>

Totals may not add due to roundings

## 2020-21 Administration Costs (£ millions)

DEPARTMENT	OCTOBER POSITION	JANUARY MONITORING POSITION	% Change
DAERA	73.8	69.2	-6.3
DfC	52.6	52.9	0.6
DfE	62.1	59.9	-3.6
DE	16.9	16.7	-1.3
DoF	161.1	157.6	-2.2
DoH	31.8	32.8	3.1
DfI	87.5	91.7	4.7
DOJ	42.8	38.8	-9.5
TEO	18.0	16.3	-9.2
PPS	2.1	2.1	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>548.7</b>	<b>537.9</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>

Totals may not add due to roundings