

FOI DOF/2024-0018

Request

I am submitting this Freedom of Information request in respect to any funding allocation / Barnett Consequential made to Northern Ireland under A) the Towns Fund and B) Future High Street Fund.

A) Towns Fund:

A1. Please tell me how funding has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance as a Barnett Consequential resulting from UK Governments £3.6bn Towns Fund?

A2. If no actual Barnett Consequential has been received to date has the Department of Finance been informed by the UK Government's Treasury Department how much has been allocated to Northern Ireland?

B) Future High Street Fund

B1. Please me how much funding has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance as a Barnett Consequential resulting from the UK Governments £1bn Future High Street Fund.

B2. If a Barnett Consequential has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance, please tell me how much of this funding received has subsequently been allocated to the appropriate Northern Ireland department for delivery, and please tell me to which department the funding has been allocated to?

B3. Subsequently, please tell me how much of this funding has been spent to date and for what purpose it was used for?

Response

I can confirm the Department holds some of the information requested.

A) Towns Fund:

A1. Please tell me how funding has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance as a Barnett Consequential resulting from UK Governments £3.6bn Towns Fund?

At UK Spending Reviews, Barnett consequentials are calculated based on overall changes to the budgets of Whitehall departments. They are not separately identifiable at programme level, therefore it is not possible for us to identify all Barnett consequentials that may have been received in respect of the Towns Fund.

However, subsequent fiscal events, such as Spring or Autumn Budgets, do identify consequentials at programme level. The table below, shows the consequentials received which can be identified as relating to Towns Fund. Barnett consequentials for Towns Fund were only identifiable in 2019-20.

			£m
	Fiscal event	Category	2019-20
Towns Fund	Supplementary Estimates 2019-20	Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL)*	0.21

*Departmental Expenditure Limits (**DEL**) cover plans that departments are committed to, announced at spending reviews. Things that departmental budgets can be spent on include the running of the services that they oversee such as schools or hospitals and the everyday cost of resources such as staff. The government controls DEL by deciding how much each department gets.

A2. If no actual Barnett Consequential has been received to date has the Department of Finance been informed by the UK Government's Treasury Department how much has been allocated to Northern Ireland?

Northern Ireland does receive Barnett consequentials on allocations to Whitehall departments in relation to the Towns Fund. Those which are identifiable are shown in the table provided in response to A1.

B) Future High Street Fund

B1. Please me how much funding has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance as a Barnett Consequential resulting from the UK Governments £1bn Future High Street Fund.

At UK Spending Reviews, Barnett consequentials are calculated based on overall changes to the budgets of Whitehall departments. They are not separately identifiable at programme level, therefore it is not possible for us to identify all Barnett consequentials that may have been received in respect of the Future High Street Fund.

However, subsequent fiscal events such as Spring or Autumn Budgets, do identify consequentials at programme level. The table below, shows the consequentials received which can be identified as relating to Future High Street Fund. Barnett consequentials for Future High Street Fund were only identifiable in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

			£m	
	Fiscal event	Category	2018-19	2019-20
Future High Street Fund	Budget 2018	Resource DEL	0.05	0.49
Future High Street Fund	Budget 2018	Capital DEL	0.13	2.06

B2. If a Barnett Consequential has been received by the Northern Ireland Executive / Department of Finance, please tell me how much of this funding received has subsequently been allocated to the appropriate Northern Ireland department for delivery, and please tell me to which department the funding has been allocated to?

Barnett consequentials, are unhypothecated, meaning there is no requirement for the Executive to spend them for the same purpose as gave rise to the consequential.

Funding received through Barnett consequential is allocated by the Executive in line with local needs and priorities. As this Executive allocation usually takes place through the wider Budget or in-year monitoring process, it is not possible to determine where specific consequentials are allocated.

B3. Subsequently, please tell me how much of this funding has been spent to date and for what purpose it was used for?

As per the response to B2. it is not possible to separately identify where individual Barnett consequentials have been spent.

The information provided in the tables above can be found in the Block Grant Transparency document which details our published Barnett consequentials and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/block-grant-transparency-july-2023>