

**Tony Simpson**  
**Director of Strategic Policy and Reform**  
Clare House  
Airport Road  
BELFAST, BT3 9ED



email: [tony.simpson@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:tony.simpson@finance-ni.gov.uk)

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**FD (DoF) 08/22**

**8 December 2022**

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**Dear Finance Director**

**PAY REMIT APPROVAL PROCESS AND GUIDANCE (2022/23)**

1. The purpose of this letter is to set out the approach that is being taken in relation to public sector pay in Northern Ireland in 2022/23, and the process and guidance for the approval of pay remits.
2. The overarching approach is that awards must be affordable in the context of each Department's Budget settlement for this year as set out in the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's (SoSNI) 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) on the Budget, so that public sector employment and essential public services can be sustainably funded going forward. In addition, employers should also be mindful of legal entitlements of individual staff groups; have cognisance of national pay arrangements where appropriate; and the established principles in previous years' pay guidance in relation to fairness and giving due regard and consideration as to how awards can be targeted to address low pay and the payment of the Living Wage as calculated annually by the Resolution Foundation and overseen by the Living Wage Commission.
3. In terms of the pay remit approvals process and guidance, this is largely unchanged from that set out in paragraph 7 of in FD (DoF) 03/21<sup>1</sup>, which should be referred to separately. Similarly, the requirements set out in that FD letter remain in relation to equal pay, holiday pay matters, and the need to avoid creating potentially unaffordable recurrent budget pressures going forward. However, one important change to the approvals process since then is set out in FD (DoF) 07/22<sup>2</sup> which encouraged Departments to delegate approval authority for staff groups that

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<sup>1</sup> [FD \(DoF\) 03/21 - Pay Remit Approval Process and Guidance \(2021/22\) - 16 March 2021 \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [FD \(DoF\) 07/22 - Pay Approval Delegation for Arm's Length Bodies with Staff Groups on NICS Terms and Conditions \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

follow NICS terms and conditions, to their affected ALBs, in order to streamline the process and speed up the implementation of pay awards for those staff groups.

4. Departments and public sector employers should therefore urgently engage with their staff groups and their representative Trade Unions on the 2022/23 awards so that these can be negotiated, agreed, and implemented as soon as possible. The pay remit process for civil servants in NICS departments remains separately negotiated by DoF. Public bodies that choose to follow NICS terms and conditions, but whose staff are not civil servants, must wait for the NICS determination before submitting a pay remit for any required approvals.
5. Departments should note that any Pay Remit submitted to DoF for consideration must be accompanied by an assurance and confirmation from the departmental Permanent Secretary that as Accounting Officer for the Department, they are content that the pay award proposed in the remit is affordable within their Department's budget.
6. Any queries in relation to this FD letter should be addressed to DoF Strategic Policy Division ([Payqueries@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Payqueries@finance-ni.gov.uk)); any queries on the pay remit approval process should be addressed to your relevant DoF Supply Officer.



**TONY SIMPSON**

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