

**Local Government Division**

**Clerk & Chief Executive of each District Council**

**Mr Trevor Polley**

Secretary, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives

**Mrs Iris McCleery**

Secretary, Association of Local Government Finance  
Officers

**Mr Ronnie Ferguson**

Secretary, National Association of Councillors

**Ms Heather Moorhead**

Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Local Government  
Association

**Mr John Buchanan**

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**Circular No: LG/15/07**

Dear Sir/Madam

**EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COUNCILS**

You will be aware that the Northern Ireland Executive has made up to £5m available to the Department of the Environment to support district councils in alleviating the hardship experienced by householders across Northern Ireland, as a result of flooding on 12 June 2007.

Under Article 26 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 the Department has powers to establish a scheme to give financial assistance to district councils which have incurred expenditure on, or in connection with, the taking of immediate action to safeguard life or property or to prevent suffering or inconvenience in their districts, or to their inhabitants, following an emergency or disaster. The Department will establish a scheme to address the recent emergency. The scheme, which will need the approval of the Department of Finance & Personnel, will detail the required supporting documentation, which will be necessary audit purposes and councils will be advised of its content shortly.

At a meeting of central and local government officials today, some councils have indicated that they were compiling a database of those homeowners affected by the flooding. Following the meeting Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister of the Environment advised councils to complete their assessments over the week-end of those households in most urgent need. She agreed that from Monday 18 June 2007, an immediate payment of £1,000 should be made available to each household affected. These payments are intended to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience, where there is evidence of:-

- significant flooding of homes, including under-floor damage in the living areas
- garages/utility areas where household utilities are installed (but excluding motor vehicles); and
- For apartments, evidence of flooding of basements containing storage rooms.

It has also been agreed that councils may incur expenditure on the following activities to help people make their homes habitable:-

- Completion of external clean-up of streets and other public areas
- Collection, retention and disposal of household contents damaged by the flooding
- Assistance to private householders to clean up their homes and gardens
- Advice on health and safety issues
- Provision of de-humidifiers to dry out homes
- Advice for householders of what support may be available from other Agencies

Should you need any further information or clarification you could contact me by email: [john.ritchie@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:john.ritchie@doeni.gov.uk) or telephone: 028 9025 6008 or Marie Finnegan [marie.finnegan@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:marie.finnegan@doeni.gov.uk) or telephone: 028 9025 6079 respectively.

Yours faithfully



**JOHN RITCHIE**  
Director

**cc All Finance Officers of district councils**