

*These notes refer to the Budget Act (Northern Ireland)
2020 (c.1) which received Royal Assent on 26 March 2020*

Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020

EXPLANATORY NOTES

PURPOSE

6. The Act authorises the use of resources for both 2019-20 and 2020-21. For 2019-20 a total revised amount of £21,022,321,000 is authorised and for 2020-21 a Vote on Account of £9,054,440,000 is taken to provide departments and public bodies with provision for the early months of 2020-21, until the Main Estimates are voted in the summer. The Act revises the limits as set in the Northern Ireland Budget Act 2019 on the amount of accruing resources, including both operating and non-operating accruing resources, that may be directed to be used for certain purposes for the year ending 31 March 2020. The Act also authorises the issue of cash from the Consolidated Fund in support of services for both 2019-20 and 2020-21. For 2019-20 the Act authorises a total revised amount of £17,519,166,000 and for 2020-21 a Vote on Account of £7,962,895,000 is taken. In addition, the Act authorises temporary borrowing up to £3,981,448,000 in 2020-21 by the Department of Finance.
7. The sums to be issued from the Consolidated Fund of Northern Ireland for the year ending 31 March 2020 are to be appropriated for services, as set out in Schedule 1 to the Act.
8. The amount of resources (including accruing resources) authorised for use for the year ending 31 March 2020 are to be used for the purposes specified in Schedule 2 to the Act.
9. The sums to be issued from the Consolidated Fund of Northern Ireland for the year ending 31 March 2021 are to be appropriated for services as set out in Schedule 3 to the Act.
10. The amount of resources authorised for use for the year ending 31 March 2021 are to be used for the purposes specified in Schedule 4 to the Act.

Section 1: Issue of sum out of the Consolidated Fund for the year ending 31 March 2020 and appropriation of that sum

Sub-section (1) authorises the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of Northern Ireland of the revised sum of £17,519,166,000 for 2019-2020.

Sub-section (2) appropriates that sum for the purposes specified in Schedule 1.

Sub-section (3) provides authority for cash limits set by the Northern Ireland Budget (Anticipation and Adjustments) Act 2019 and the Northern Ireland Budget Act 2019 to be superseded by the amounts specified in column 2 of Schedule 1 to the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Section 2: Use of resources (other than accruing resources) in the year ending 31 March 2020

Sub-section (1) authorises the use of resources amounting to £21,022,321,000 for 2019-2020.

Sub-section (2) authorises that sum for the purposes specified in column 1 of Schedule 2.

Sub-section (3) specifies the departments and other bodies to which these authorisations apply.

Sub-section (4) provides authority for the resource limits set by the Northern Ireland Budget (Anticipation and Adjustments) Act 2019 and the Northern Ireland Budget Act 2019 to be superseded by the amounts specified in column 2 of Schedule 2 to the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Section 3: Revised limits on use of certain accruing resources in the year ending 31 March 2020

Sub-section (1) sets relevant revised limits on the amount of accruing resources, including both operating and non-operating accruing resources, that may be directed to be used for certain specified purposes in the year ending 31 March 2020 in addition to the resources authorised by the Act.

Sub-section (2) provides authority for the direction of accruing resources as specified in column 3 of Schedule 2 to be used for the purposes specified in the corresponding entries in column 1 of that Schedule.

Sub-section (3) provides authority for the accruing resource limits set by the Northern Ireland Budget Act 2019 to be superseded by the amounts specified in column 3 of Schedule 2 to the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Section 4: Issue of sum out of the Consolidated Fund for the year ending 31 March 2020 and appropriation of that sum

Sub-section (1) authorises the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of Northern Ireland of the sum of £7,962,895,000 for 2020-21.

Sub-section (2) appropriates that sum for the purposes specified in Schedule 3.

Section 5: Power of the Department of Finance to borrow

This section authorises the temporary borrowing by the Department of Finance in 2020-21 of approximately half the sum covered by Section 4 (1). This is a normal safeguard against the possibility of a temporary deficiency arising in the Northern Ireland Consolidated Fund.

Section 6: Use of resources (other than accruing resources) in the year ending 31 March 2021

Sub-section (1) authorises the use of resources amounting to £9,054,440,000 for 2020-2021.

Sub-section (2) authorises that sum for the purposes specified in column 1 of Schedule 4.

Sub-section (3) specifies the departments and other bodies to which these authorisations apply.

Sub-section (4) confirms that this section does not include accruing resources.

Section 7: Interpretation

As in the Budget Act.

Section 8: Short Title

This section sets out the title of the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2020.

SCHEDULES TO THE ACT

Schedule 1: Sums granted for the year ending 31 March 2020.

Schedule 2: Amounts of resources authorised for use and amounts of accruing resources which may be used in year ending 31 March 2020.

Schedule 3: Sums granted for the year ending 31 March 2021.

Schedule 4: Amounts of resources authorised for use in the year ending 31 March 2021.