**DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY – ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS ACT (NI) 2026**

Section 2 of the Administrative and Financial Provisions Act (NI) 2026 enables the Department for the Economy to provide financial assistance to any person where it is likely to be in the interest of the economy. Section 2(3) includes provision for the Department to prepare and issue a statement of general approach on the exercise of this power.

## Background

1. During the Covid-19 Pandemic DfE found that its current legislative powers were insufficient to provide financial assistance in an efficient and timely manner. The Administrative and Financial Provisions Act addresses this deficiency and provides for the Department to provide financial assistance where it is likely to be in the interest of the economy.

2. This power will not increase the overall quantum of government expenditure locally; rather, it will provide a readily accessible means of disbursing the funding that has been allocated to DfE, as well as funding that may be provided through UK Government initiatives.

## Statement of General Approach

3. Use of this power will be governed by all normal rules and guidance that apply to the Department in relation to public spending, including delegation limits, affordability and ensuring best value for money. This includes compliance with Managing Public Money Northern Ireland, Departmental governance arrangements and any relevant guidance issued by the Department of Finance.

4. This power does not replace any existing Department for Economy powers; where appropriate powers are already in place, it is expected that these would be used. The Department expects this power to be used primarily in circumstances where no more specific statutory power is available or suitable.

5. The Department will not seek to use this power where it would duplicate the work and authority of another Department or Arm’s Length Body.

6. In the event of a query on whether this power should be used, Departmental Solicitors’ Office will be consulted.

24 November 2026