

£410 million budget boost for Northern Ireland – with extension of uk wide support schemes

- People and businesses in Northern Ireland to benefit from extension of Covid-19 support schemes.
- Chancellor announces £410 million in additional funding for Northern Ireland.
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) will be exempted from Corporation Tax from 2020-21.

Millions of families and businesses across Northern Ireland will continue to be supported by the UK Government through a Budget that 'meets the moment', the Chancellor said today.

Speaking in the House of Commons today, Rishi Sunak set out a three-part plan that protects jobs and livelihoods through the next stage of the crisis, starts the work of building our future economy and begins fixing the public finances once we are on the way to recovery.

As part of the next stage of the UK Government's Plan for Jobs, he announced the furlough and self-employment support schemes would be extended until the end of September, alongside a one-off £500 payment to eligible Working Tax Credit claimants and Covid-19 related income tax exemptions for employees.

The Chancellor also set-out an extension to the VAT reduction for the tourism and hospitality sectors and provided a £410 million boost for Northern Ireland with additional funding for the Northern Ireland Executive through the Barnett formula.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

"Since the start of the pandemic, the UK Government has supported jobs and businesses across Northern Ireland – and this Budget continues our Plan for Jobs through the next stage of our recovery.

"It is also a Budget that invests millions of pounds in Northern Ireland to fuel economic growth and ensure we bounce back from this pandemic together."

Northern Ireland Secretary, Brandon Lewis, said:

"Today's Budget underlines the UK Government's commitment to Northern Ireland and to the Union.

"The decision to extend furlough, self-employment and business support, the Universal Credit uplift, and the hospitality and tourism VAT cut reaffirms those commitments and gives people and businesses the certainty they need to plan for the future.

"Today's Budget has announced an additional £410 million for the Northern Ireland Executive as well as £11 million for the Community Renewal Fund and the extension of the Government's £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund to cover the whole United Kingdom.

"The Government will continue to invest in Northern Ireland's future to ensure that we Build Back Better together right across the country and continue to protect and support businesses and livelihoods."

The Chancellor was also clear that in today's Budget we begin the work of building our future economy.

The Budget also provides targeted support for Northern Ireland, including exempting the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) – Northern Ireland's biggest landlord – from Corporation Tax, which will save the NIHE millions in corporate tax payments.

Nearly half of the £400 million New Deal for Northern Ireland package announced in December 2020, has also been allocated across four areas, subject to business case. These include: new systems for supermarkets and small traders to manage new trading arrangements; greater resilience in medicine supply chains; promoting Northern Ireland's goods and services overseas; and supporting skills development.

In order to protect jobs, increase productivity and maintain the competitiveness of Northern Ireland, the Chancellor outlined direct local investment to towns and communities across the UK to improve town centres, high streets, local transport and cultural assets through the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund, the Community Ownership Fund, and Community Renewal Fund.

Fuel duty will be also frozen for the 11th consecutive year, while alcohol duties will be frozen across the board – only the third time in 20 years, saving drinkers £1.7 billion over the coming years. This means spirits duty will be frozen for the fourth year running, making a typical bottle of Irish Whiskey 30p cheaper.

As part of the aim to maintain the UK as a premier destination for trade and investment the Government continues to work constructively with the Northern Ireland Executive to establish at least one Freeport in Northern Ireland, which will channel new investment to regenerate communities.

Businesses in Northern Ireland will also benefit from UK-wide initiatives to invest in the future of firms from start-up to scale up.

The new Help to Grow scheme to offer up to 130,000 companies across the UK a digital and management boost, and a £375 million UK-wide 'Future Fund: Breakthrough' will support highly innovative companies such as those working in life sciences, quantum computing, or clean tech, that are aiming to raise at least £20 million of funding.

Plans to ensure the UK remains a prime destination for talent and investment will see reforms to the immigration system, which will to help ambitious UK businesses attract the brightest and best international talent, and the

launch of the world's first green savings bond for retail investors allowing savers to help drive the country's transition to net zero.

In good news for sports fans, the Chancellor announced £2.8 million to support the UK and Ireland's 2030 World Cup bid and £25 million investment in grassroots sports enough for 700 new pitches across the UK.

Covid-19 support provided in Northern Ireland so far includes:

- Almost 250,000 jobs in Northern Ireland protected by the CJRS
- 200,000 people in Northern Ireland have claimed through the SEISS
- Over £1.6bn provided to over 39,000 businesses in Northern Ireland through BBLS and CBILS