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Handwritten: NIAC
- 7 JAN 2019

Dr Andrew Murrison MP
Chair, Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
Northern Ireland Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

19 December 2018

Handwritten signature: D. Murrison

I write to provide clarification on the amount spent on MLA salaries and to correct information previously provided to the NIAC Committee on this issue.

In evidence to the Committee on 4 July 2018 a figure of £6.3 million per year was provided in response to a question on the cost of paying MLAs their salary. The opening 2018/19 budget position was £6.6 million and budgeted figures, of course, develop throughout the year. I understand that the figure provided to the Committee was on the basis of the budgeted figure. However, the actual expenditure for 2017/18 was in fact £5.9 million (for MLA salaries, pension, and social security costs). I apologise that the information provided was inaccurate but can assure you that there was no intention to mislead.

In my evidence to the Committee on 21 November I advised that between 1 January 2017 and 31 October 2018 £8.5 million has been paid in salaries to Members of the Legislative Assembly. Please note that this figure related to salaries only. The figure including salaries, social security, and pension costs for the same period was £10.8 million.

I recognise the justifiable interest that Members of the Committee have in relation to the amount paid to MLAs. However, I would advise that it is the Assembly Commission which holds the budget for the payment of salaries to MLAs and they are the appropriate body to advise on exact figures paid. Details of this expenditure are not held by the Northern Ireland Office and the figures above have been provided by the Assembly Commission. Figures on salaries and expenses are also published on the NI Assembly website.

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**RT HON KAREN BRADLEY MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**