

*These notes refer to the Financial Assistance Act (Northern Ireland)
2009 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 4 February 2009*

Financial Assistance Act (Northern Ireland) 2009

EXPLANATORY NOTES

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7. The options considered were either to do nothing or to seek to take new statutory powers to provide the First Minister and deputy First Minister with a legislative mechanism for providing financial assistance to help to alleviate the effects of exceptional circumstances as, and when, they arise.
8. Lessons learnt from previous crisis situations, was that the Executive needed to be prepared, both financially and legislatively, to deal with exceptional, extreme and unanticipated circumstances. The do nothing option was considered to be an inappropriate response for dealing with such situations. The preferred option was to introduce urgently, legislation to provide the First Minister and deputy First Minister with the necessary powers to act in certain circumstances and situations. The legislation will ensure that the Executive is able to act immediately to provide financial assistance in response to an emergency situation.