

## **NI Fiscal Council creates space for conversations around NI public finances**

The NI Fiscal Council is holding its first annual conference in Belfast on Monday 18 September 2023. It brings together a wide range of speakers from across and beyond Northern Ireland to explore key themes around the NI public finances.

Attendees will hear from the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Finance, Neil Gibson, on the current fiscal climate before panels of experts consider four key questions:

1. Is the financing package that the NI receives from the UK Government sufficient to meet the region's needs?
2. Are the resources available to NI departments well spent?
3. What role should revenue raising play in making the NI public finances and public services more sustainable?
4. Does public spending in NI support economic growth?

Sir Robert Chote, chair of the Council said:

“Since we were created in 2021, the NI Fiscal Council has tried to bring greater transparency and independent scrutiny to the evolution of the NI public finances as well as addressing key issues around their long-term sustainability. We are grateful to everyone who have helped us and taken an interest in our work.

The goal of this conference is to build on our work by bringing together experts with an informed interest in some of the themes we have been exploring and other aspects of the public finances. With participants and attendees from the public sector, the political world, academia, finance and other independent fiscal institutions, we hope this will create an opportunity for ongoing conversations that can deepen and broaden both our own and public understanding.

The conversations are all the more important at a time when the NI public finances are under strain and when preparations need to be made for the possible return of budget-making responsibility to the Stormont institutions.”

Notes to editors:

1. Conference agenda and ‘meet the speakers’ is available here: <https://www.nifiscalcouncil.org/nifc-annual-conference-2023>
2. Further information on the NI Fiscal Council is available here: <https://www.nifiscalcouncil.org/>
3. Follow us on Twitter: [@NIFiscalCouncil](https://twitter.com/NI_Fiscal_Council)