

STATEMENT FROM:



# BILLY ARMSTRONG MLA

ULSTER UNIONIST ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR MID-ULSTER

- Prospect House, Coagh Rd, Stewartstown BT71 5JH. **Tel: 028 87738641**
- 20 High Street, Moneymore BT45 7PD. **Tel: 028 86748090**
- Room 308, Parliament Buildings, Stormont BT4 3XX. **Tel: 028 90520305**
- Keep up to date on [www.billyarmstrong.co.uk](http://www.billyarmstrong.co.uk)
- Email directly to [billy@billyarmstrong.co.uk](mailto:billy@billyarmstrong.co.uk)
- Follow on [twitter](https://twitter.com/unionistbilly) - [@unionistbilly](https://twitter.com/unionistbilly)

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## **Armstrong welcomes fifth Cold Weather Payment**

Ulster Unionist MLA Billy Armstrong has welcomed the news that a further cold weather payment is to be made to people living in specific areas of Northern Ireland.

The Mid-Ulster MLA, who is also his Party's spokesman on Social Development issues said;

"I welcome the news that the Social Development Minister is to issue a fifth cold weather payment to people living in certain parts of the Province. These payments of £25 will be made automatically to those who qualify and will be in addition to the Winter Fuel Payments of £250 and over, made to people aged over 60 years."

"The £25 payments are triggered once the Met Office forecasts zero or sub-zero temperatures for a seven day period at its weather stations in Aldergrove, Ballykelly, Castleberg, Katesbridge and St Angelo. This was the case for the Katesbridge weather station for the period 19 February to 25 February 2010, and the Castleberg and St Angelo (Enniskillen) weather stations for the period 16 February to 22 February 2010."

Billy explained that it will be issued to people living in the following Postcode areas - BT24-28, 30-35, 45-48, 60-71, 74-82 and 92-94, where qualifying DSD customers will receive an automatic payment of £25 by the 3rd March.

Qualifying customers are as follows – anyone in receipt of State Pension Credit or income related Employment and Support Allowance (main phase) for at least one day in the period of cold weather; or they or their partner must be in receipt of Income Support, income based Jobseekers Allowance or income related Employment and Support Allowance (in the assessment phase) for at least one day in the period of cold weather and: they have a dependent child under five; or they are in receipt of a pensioner, disability, severe disability or disabled child premium; or they are entitled to Child Tax Credit for a child or qualifying young person who is disabled or severely disabled.

"This winter has been the worst for 30 years, and these payments will go at least some way to helping some of the most vulnerable people in our society to heat their homes and combat fuel poverty."

ENDS