

COVID-19 Northern Ireland Updates 2nd April:

Health

- The total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases has risen to 774 with the number of deaths totalling 36
- The Public Health Agency believe that the social distancing measures put in place will have an impact on the figures over the next few weeks
- A section of the Belfast City Hospital will now act as a 230-bed regional Covid-19 facility as part of surge planning
- A 'check in and chat' service has now been launched for the over 60s help older members of the community in self-isolation
- The Department of Health says it doesn't plan to change its advice on the symptoms of Covid-19

Business

- The Minister for Economy speaking at the Stormont Daily press conference, has said more than £100m has been paid out to small businesses across Northern Ireland so far
- She added that 'the focus of the department now, will be issuing the £25,000 grant scheme for the hospitality and tourism sector'. A further announcement will be made next week.
- The Health and Safety Department has received 400 calls this week in relation to social distancing measures in the workplace
- Invest NI have been notified of 17,000 furloughed jobs thus far, with this number expected to rise
- The Department of Communities has received over 33,000 new claims for universal credit, the typical figures would be in the region of 3000 new claims and this is certain to impact the overall NI unemployment figures

Personal Finance

- The Financial Conduct Authority is asking banks to freeze payments on loans and credit cards for up to three months for those facing difficulties.

