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**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

15th August, 2017

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

As previously notified to you, I enclose a copy of the report for item 7d and an additional item 9a to be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 18th August, 2017.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

7. **Operational Issues**

(d) Minutes of active Belfast Board Ltd (Pages 1 - 4)

9. **Notices of Motion**

(a) Notice of Motion - Cladding and High Rise Buildings (Pages 5 - 10)

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ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

Monday, 7th August, 2017

MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

(Held in the Lavery Room, City Hall)

Attendees

- Directors:** Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson)
Councillor Boyle
Councillor Corr
Mr. J. Higgins
Mr. C. Kirkwood
Mr. M. McGarrity
Mr. R. Stewart and
Mr. M. Webster.
- Officers:** Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director,
City and Neighbourhood Services Department;
Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
- GLL:** Mr. G. Holland, Partnership Manager; and
Mr. R. McKenna, Regional Community Sports Manager.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Long, Mr. P. Boyle, Mr. M. Keenan, Mr. N. Mitchell and Mr. G. Kirk (GLL).

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 15th June were approved.

Matters Arising

Charitable Status

The Board noted that the Partnership Manager was working with the Council's Legal Services Section to finalise the report on the potential for seeking charitable status and that it would be submitted to its next meeting.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Active Belfast Limited Returns to Companies House

The Partnership Manager reminded the Board that, at its meeting on 15th June, it had been provided with an update on the status of those documents which were required to be submitted, on a regular basis, to Companies House in relation to Active Belfast Limited.

He provided a further update and pointed out that the Register of Directors now being held by Companies House reflected fully the current membership of the Board and that it had acknowledged on its website the receipt of the Annual Confirmation Statement for 2017/2018. He reminded the Board further that, on 15th June, it had agreed that a version of the Articles of Association, which had been submitted to Companies House previously and which had been returned to allow for some anomalies to be addressed, should be revised and be re-submitted, on the understanding that a further amendment would be required once the Board had reached a decision on whether or not to apply for charitable status. He circulated an amended version of the document for signature by the Directors and pointed out that it was anticipated that it would be accepted and acknowledged by Companies House prior to the next meeting of the Board.

The Board noted the information which had been provided.

Independent Review of Current Operating Model

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th June, it had approved the terms of reference for an independent review of the current operating model for leisure provision, which had been commissioned by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19th May.

The Partnership Manager reported that, following a tendering process, First Point Management and Consultancy Limited had been appointed by the Council to conduct the review, which was due to be completed by the end of September. A three-week consultation process would commence on 7th August and the consultants would, later in the week, be visiting the City to meet with key stakeholders, including the Active Belfast Limited Board, which would have a prominent role to play in the review process. Accordingly, he invited the Board to identify a suitable date on which to meet with the consultants and to agree the extent of its representation at that meeting.

After discussion, the Board agreed that it be represented at the meeting by the Chairperson and by Mr. J. Higgins, with the preferred date being the afternoon of Thursday, 10th August. The Board agreed also that those Directors who were not in attendance be offered the opportunity to attend the meeting and noted that the Partnership Manager would, in advance, forward to Directors the Terms of Reference for the review, together with background information on First Point Management and Consultancy Limited.

Reporting of Active Belfast Limited Performance

The Board was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th June, it had agreed that, in future, quarterly KPI performance reports would be presented to the Board in the third month of the subsequent quarter, with the KPI spreadsheet and accompanying narrative to be circulated to Directors by the middle of the previous month.

The Partnership Manager explained that the revised reporting arrangements would, amongst other things, allow Directors additional time to scrutinise the KPI

spreadsheet and supporting information, in advance of considering the performance report in the following month. He confirmed that staff from the Council and from GLL were in the process of collating and analysing the performance data for the first quarter of 2017/2018, which it was anticipated would be circulated to the Board in the week commencing 14th August. The performance report for that quarter would then be presented to the Board on 18th September.

Noted.

Update on Aquatics Strategy

The Partnership Manager reminded the Board that, at its meeting on 20th April, it had approved an outline plan and proposed timeframe for the delivery of a Belfast-wide Aquatics Strategy.

He reported that the proposed timeframe included provision to undertake an initial four-week consultation exercise with selected key stakeholders around the vision statement and the eight strategic principles which had been formulated by the Aquatics Strategy Working Group and approved by the Board, together with a proposed design format and content headings. He explained that the consultation process should have commenced on 5th May, however, due to technical and operational issues, it had been delayed until 10th July. A total of sixty-seven groups had been invited to respond to the consultation via the Council's Citizen Space online consultation platform, with submissions to be received by 11th August.

He confirmed that it had been necessary to make a number of minor revisions to the initial timeframe for the delivery of the Aquatics Strategy and that those had been reflected in the documentation issued as part of the current pre-consultation process. However, they would have no impact upon the completion of the overall Strategy or its anticipated launch in early 2018.

The Board noted the information which had been provided.

Other Business

GLL Update

Mr. Holland informed the Board that a voluntary redundancy exercise, which had been undertaken recently across all GLL-managed facilities to coincide with the temporary closure of the Andersonstown Leisure Centre, had now been completed. In total, fifty staff had been granted redundancy, including seventeen from Andersonstown Leisure Centre. The remaining staff in that Centre had since been transferred to other facilities.

He added that the new leisure facility in Castle Lane was scheduled to open in November and that details of its official opening would be circulated to the Board, once finalised.

The Board noted the information which had been provided.

Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that its next meeting would take place at 4.30 p.m. on Monday, 18th September, with the venue to be confirmed in due course.

Chairperson



Subject:	Notice of Motion : Cladding on Flats and High Rise Buildings
Date:	18 th August, 2017
Reporting Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer, ext 6313
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer, ext 6313

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the response from the Department of Finance in relation to the Council's Motion on Cladding on Flats and High Rise Buildings.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response and take any such action as may be determined.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	<p>The Council, at its meeting on 3rd July, passed the following motion on Cladding on Flats and High Rise Buildings, which had been proposed by Councillor Attwood and seconded by Councillor Lyons:</p> <p>“This Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses its deepest sympathy to the victims and families of the Kensington fire tragedy; notes with concern that the cladding used in the refurbishment contributed to the disaster; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> notes that it has a statutory duty to enforce the Building Regulations standards, which includes requirements on health, structural stability and fire safety. <p>Accordingly, the Council calls upon the Department of Finance to undertake an immediate review of all fire safety requirements and guidance issued under the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 to ensure that they are based upon the most recent developments in fire safety design and construction.</p> <p>The Council will provide advice to government, NIHE, housing providers and industry on any changes to the Regulations designed to protect the safety of residents in flats or other high rise buildings and will ensure that any changes to Building Regulations to protect the safety of residents in flats or other high rise buildings are enforced on all new developments or refurbishments across the City.”</p>
3.2	A response has now been received from Mr. P. Wickens, Chief Executive of the Department of Finance’s Enterprise Shared Services section, which is responsible for administering the Buildings Regulations legislation in Northern Ireland. A copy of the response is attached.
3.3	Mr. Wickens has confirmed that the Department of Finance is fully aware of the issues arising from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, has highlighted the Department’s input into a number of guidance letters promoting the appropriate testing of Aluminium Composite Materials and has thanked councils for their co-operation and support in reporting on those tests.
3.4	He points out that the Department of Finance fully recognises its role in ensuring that all aspects of Building Regulations specify the minimum requirements which can be reasonably attained and that it has, since the introduction in 1972 of those Regulations, developed proposals to reflect research carried out on the Government’s behalf by, for example, the Building Research Establishment. He explains that Part E (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations, which had been updated in 2012, would, following the investigation into the Grenfell Tower tragedy, require further consideration and that Departmental officials had, in the interim, initiated a review of the Technical Booklet which provided guidance on that element of the legislation, with a view to quickly addressing any straightforward amendments to that guidance.
3.5	Mr. Wickens then highlights the extent of the support which the Department of Finance receives from the Northern Ireland Building Regulations Advisory Committee and concludes by pointing out that officials had met with their counterparts within the Building Control Service and by acknowledging the ongoing goodwill and the expertise which has been shared to date.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.6	None
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.7	None

4.0	Document Attached
	Response from Mr. P. Wickens, Department of Finance

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Our ref: SCORR-0142-2017

Date: 7 August 2017

Dear Mr Downey

Thank you for your letter of 14 July 2017 to Hugh Widdis highlighting the motion passed by Belfast City Council at its meeting on 3 July on Cladding on Flats and High Rise Buildings. I am replying on behalf of Mr Widdis who is on leave.

I would first assure you that the Department of Finance is fully aware of the issues and concerns raised by the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

The Department has provided detailed input on a number of guidance letters promoting appropriate testing of Aluminium Composite Materials (ACMs) to help replicate UK Government advice to local bodies including District Councils. The Department is grateful for the co-operation and support of Councils in reporting on these investigations.

Belfast City Council's motion calls on the Department to *"undertake an immediate review of all fire safety requirements and guidance issued under the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 to ensure that they are based upon the most recent developments in fire safety design and construction"*.

The Department fully recognises its role in ensuring that all aspects of Building Regulations specify minimum requirements which in the opinion of the Department can be reasonably attained. Since the introduction of Building Regulations in 1972, the Department has developed proposals to follow up to date research carried out on behalf of the UK Government by bodies such as Building Research Establishment (BRE) and others.

The Department receives support from the Northern Ireland Building Regulations Advisory Committee (NIBRAC) to help ensure proposals suit local circumstances and practices. Consultation with NIBRAC is required for any legislative changes and recruitment to NIBRAC as quickly as possible and by early 2018 at the latest is a key priority for the Department's Building Standards Branch. The expertise gathered will assist in the longer term and more detailed review which will build on lessons learned from the Grenfell tragedy.

Part E (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations was last updated in October 2012. Work on a further technical uplift involves a detailed and complex range of measures which will now require further consideration arising from investigations into the Grenfell fire. As an interim measure, therefore, officials will undertake a short review of Technical Booklet E (Fire Safety), which provides guidance to the requirements of Part E of the current regulations, with a view to quickly addressing any potentially straightforward amendments to the guidance. This review is underway, after which any policy proposals will be subject to Ministerial consideration and consultation.

I understand that officials have had meetings with Belfast City Council Building Control. The Department greatly values Council Enforcement Officers' views and acknowledges the ongoing goodwill and expertise shared to date.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wickens

PAUL WICKENS
Chief Executive ESS

cc: Hugh Widdis
Desi McDonnell