



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Building Regulation Fees for Applications including Insulation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	26th June, 2023
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of the report is to provide the update the Committee on the implementation for the waiving of Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving loft insulation which are not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts, which commenced on 1 December 2023 until 31 May 2023 subject to review.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to decide if: i. the exercise should continue beyond 31st May 2023 for an additional six months; or ii. the exercise should cease, on the basis that of the outcomes outlined in the report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Key Issues and Current Position</u>
3.1	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on on 8th November agreed to waive Building Regulation inspection fees for those applications involving installation of insulation which were not part of funded schemes or maintenance contracts.

3.2	The waiving of fees was implemented from the date of Council ratification on 1st December, 2022 until 31st May, 2023 subject to review.
3.3	From 1st December 2023 until 31st May 2023, Building Control staff ran a series of reports, carried out an analysis and identified 95 applicants who they considered may have been eligible for a refund under this initiative. This was similar to the initial scoping analysis carried out and is based upon assessing the application details provided and judging those which fall outside any scheme and maintenance contracts that we are aware of.
3.4	A covering letter and a declaration form was issued to each potential eligible applicant.
3.5	Out of the 95 letters and declaration forms issued, 11 declaration forms were returned.
3.6	Through further investigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 applicants were not due a refund as fees had been paid through a scheme.</li> <li>• 4 applicants were eligible for a refund however the insulation was part of multiple works. Once the notional fee of £400 for insulation was deducted from the estimate cost of works the payment made was still due, therefore a refund was not applicable, and applicants were informed in writing.</li> </ul>
3.7	Using this method of analysis and process to identify and contact any applicants who may have paid the fees outside of a scheme has therefore not resulted in a refund being issued to any applicant.
	<b><u>Energy Efficiency and Cost of Living Advice</u></b>
3.8	Building Control has liaised with Corporate Communications and will be putting an article in the summer edition of City Matters (end of June) on the cost of living and energy advice for your home. This article is signing posting to links on Belfast City Council website, NIHE and Energy Saving Trust. A second article is being considered for inclusion in the winter edition, the details of the article are still to be agreed.
	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
3.9	The method used in attempting to identify those applicants who may have paid their own fees, issuing the documentation and dealing with follow up correspondence is labour intensive and undertaken outside existing duties.
	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
3.10	There are no equality, good relations, or rural needs issues.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None