



27th February 2012

Mr Stephen Hewitt
Chair Licensing Forum
Belfast City Council
Floor 5
9 Lanyon Place
Belfast
BT1 3LP

Dear Stephen

Re: Memorandum of Understanding between District Councils and the Fire Authority

The above Memorandum of Understanding which relates to the co-ordination of fire safety in premises regulated and licensed by District Councils was considered by the Chief Environmental Health Officers Group (CEHOG) at their Executive meeting on 23 February 2012.

CEHOG would support the proposals to devolve responsibility under Part III of the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 to District Councils in relation to premises or parts of premises that require a licence in order for them to exercise their licensing functions, particularly with respect to licensing places of entertainment, cinemas and civil marriages.

CEHOG Executive Committee members welcome the Memorandum of Understanding which clarifies and co-ordinates the roles and responsibilities of Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Services and District Councils with respect to fire safety in premises for which district councils are responsible for licensing and in which NIFRS is responsible for ongoing fire safety compliance. This will ensure that no unnecessary burden is placed on regulated businesses and meets the government's better regulation agenda which views the regulatory burden as a major priority and expects regulators, whilst protecting consumers, to also support businesses and promote economic growth.

Chairman:
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The CEHOG Executive also endorsed the actions of the licensing forum in proactively pursuing the development of the Memorandum of Understanding and will support the adoption of this measure across Councils in Northern Ireland

Yours sincerely



Barney Heywood
Chair Chief Environmental Health Officers Group