



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
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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

- notes that it has a statutory duty to enforce the Building Regulations standards, which includes requirements on health, structural stability and fire safety.

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.

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.”

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.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.6 None

Equality or Good Relations Implications

3.7 None

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