



From: David Polley
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Our Ref: STOF-0201-2023
Date: 28 March 2023

Eilish McGoldrick
Democratic Services Officer
Belfast City Council
Legal and Civic Services Department
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Via email: McGoldrickE@belfastcity.gov.uk

Dear Eilish

RENT CONTROLS

Thank you for your correspondence of 24 March 2023, addressed to the Permanent Secretary and Head of the Civil Service. As director for Housing Supply Policy, I have been asked to respond on you on their behalf.

You detail that the Belfast City Council's City Growth and Regeneration Committee have noted the rising cost of private renting in Belfast. You advise that the Committee wants to see the cost for renters reduced and considers that the introduction of rent controls is one way to help renters. You add that the Committee recognises that any decisions to progress this action would depend on the Executive being up and running and a Minister being in place.

As stated in a previous response your colleague (Sara Steele) on 16 February, Section 7 of the Private Tenancies Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 placed a duty on the Department to research and consult on the implications of a rent freeze or rent decrease and to lay a report before the Assembly. The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) was subsequently commissioned by the Department to research and consult on these implications and the ensuing Report was laid in the Assembly and published on the Department's website. However, as already noted by your Committee, any further action on these issues is subject to a decision by an incoming Minister. Moreover, bringing any rent controls into effect would require further secondary legislation and therefore a functioning Assembly.

I trust you find my response helpful.



Yours sincerely,

David Polley
Director of Housing Supply Policy



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