



Subject:	<b>Motion: Review of Housing Fitness Standard – Response from the Minister for Communities</b>
Date:	23 <sup>rd</sup> October, 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
	To consider the responses from the Ministers for Communities in relation to a motion on the Review of Housing Fitness Standard.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	The Committee is asked to consider the response and take such action there on as may be determined.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>

The Committee will recall that the Council, at its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> September, passed the following motion:

“This Council welcomes the Communities Minister Carál Ní Chuilín’s ambitious programme aimed at addressing housing stress, providing housing solutions and supporting those in greatest need. This council recognises that housing faces many challenges but agrees that it should be a primary focus of government as it is so vital to building and sustaining communities and improving the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

This council notes that the current housing fitness standard that is applied to private rented housing in this district is the statutory minimum physical standard which focuses on the most basic structural standards for human habitation, and applies to all tenures. It was last updated in 1992. This Council calls on the Department for Communities to carry out a review of the fitness standard, to include a review of sanctions on private landlords for failing to maintain properties, with a view to introducing legislation which offers greater protection to tenants.

Further to the above, Council calls on the Department of Communities to review and strengthen their own rules and regulations regarding the housing fitness standards of existing properties managed by the Housing Executive and various Housing Associations. This Council notes the poor conditions that some social housing tenants are living in and calls on the Minister to urgently address these conditions as a matter of priority.”

A response has now been received on behalf of the Minister for Communities (copy attached) in which the current status and the areas of the review is outlined. In addition, the response indicates that In relation to conditions in the social housing sector, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive had advised that the Housing Executive’s capital and revenue programmes are designed to maintain properties to a decent standard and maintenance programmes are ongoing.

Financial & Resource Implications

None associated with this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None associated with this report.

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document attached</b>
	Copy of response on behalf of the Minister for Communities.