



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITIES**

Room 430  
Parliament Buildings  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX

22 October 2021

Siobhan Toland  
Director of City Service  
City and Neighbourhood Services  
Belfast City Council  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linenhall Street  
Belfast BT2 8BP

[TolandS@BelfastCity.gov.uk](mailto:TolandS@BelfastCity.gov.uk)

Dear Siobhan

**Private Tenancies Bill – Call for Evidence**

At its meeting on 21 October 2021, the Committee considered your correspondence seeking an extension to the Call for Evidence on the Private Tenancies Bill, in order for the December Council to ratify a response.

The Committee are, at present, under immense pressure to complete the Committee Stages of a number of Bills under time constraints imposed by the limited time remaining in the current mandate.

The Committee agreed to write to you to advise that they will commence oral evidence sessions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November and aim to start deliberations on the Bill by the end of November.

In response to your request, the Committee agreed to offer the extension, as the Members are very keen to receive a written submission from BCC. However, Members wished to ensure that it is understood that they may be close to the completion of their considerations of the Bill by early December 2021.

Yours sincerely

*Janice Thompson*

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**Dr Janice Thompson  
Clerk to the Committee**

## Teresa Gallen

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**From:** Teresa Gallen on behalf of Siobhan Toland  
**Sent:** 15 October 2021 09:25  
**To:** 'Committee.Communities@niassembly.gov.uk'  
**Cc:** Vivienne Donnelly; Claire O'Neill (Public Health); Emma Kearney  
**Subject:** FW: consultation

Dear Committee Members

It has been brought to my attention than on the 12<sup>th</sup> October that the Department have issued a call for evidence for the Private Tenancies Bill [Call for Evidence - Private Tenancies Bill - Northern Ireland Assembly - Citizen Space \(niassembly.org.uk\)](#).

Unfortunately the time scale for submission by 29<sup>th</sup> October precludes Council members and committee input into these important proposals. This is disappointing as the members are very keen to see and discuss the new legislative proposals for the private rented sector

Therefore Belfast City Council is unable to submit a formal response to this exercise within this timeframe as any draft response would need to be considered by the members at the November People and Communities Committee with formal ratification of a response by the December Council . Can the department give consideration of an extension to the timeframe.

Regards

Siobhan

Siobhan Toland, Director of City Services  
City and Neighbourhood Services

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**From:** +Communications Public Email <[Communications@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Communications@niassembly.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 05 October 2021 12:35  
**Subject:** PRESS RELEASE: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE LAUNCHES CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE PRIVATE TENANCIES BILL 051021

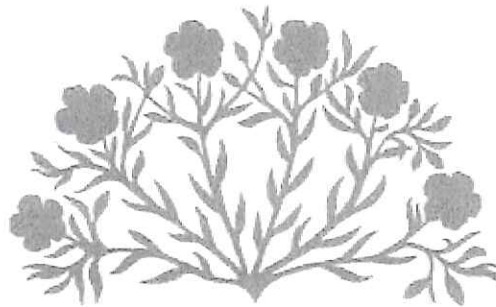
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Please see attached and below, a press release from the Assembly Committee for Communities re: **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE LAUNCHES CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE PRIVATE TENANCIES BILL.**

Kind Regards

Communications Office



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

05 October  
2021

CFC 07/20/21

### **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE LAUNCHES CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE PRIVATE TENANCIES BILL**

The Assembly's Committee for Communities has today launched its 'Call for Views' on the new Private Tenancies Bill, which focuses on the role and regulation of the private rented housing sector.

If passed, this new Bill will provide tenants with better protection by ensuring landlords and agents meet regulations about the quality and safety of the accommodation offered. It also seeks to safeguard tenants by ensuring a legislative requirement for written tenancy agreements, restrictions on rent increases and an increase in the eviction notice period.

Speaking after today's launch, the Committee Chairperson, Paula Bradley MLA said: **"The private rental sector has grown considerably over the past decade, particularly for the 25 - 34 age group. It now accounts for more than 17% of housing stock in Northern Ireland. This growth is likely to continue if first time buyers are priced out of the market due to rising house prices and the potential shortage of accessible and affordable mortgage products.**

**“While rogue landlords continue to be in the minority, the fact remains that they do exist, and with many of our citizens facing economic uncertainty and hardship, regulating this sector to better protect the vulnerable is a priority for the Committee”**

Ms. Bradley continued: **“My Committee is generally supportive of the key principals of the Bill. However, while it is a good starting point, we are aware that it may not address all of the issues within the sector and that there are longer term issues still to be considered. We will carefully scrutinise all aspects of this Bill, and if in doing so, we uncover any gaps in the proposals or crucial areas that we feel have been overlooked, we will not hesitate to seek clarification and propose amendments.”**

Ms. Bradley concluded: **“It is vital that as many people as possible, including the key organisations within the sector, advocates and importantly tenants themselves take this opportunity to provide their views on this important Bill.**

**“All of our local people deserve the basic right to live in a safe, secure and healthy home. We hope that the final Bill will be a first step towards bringing that aspiration closer to a reality for many within the private rental sector.”**

The Committee’s ‘Call for Views’ and further information on how to respond can be accessed on the Northern Ireland Assembly website via <http://nia1.me/4pc> The closing date for responses is **Friday 29 October 2021.**

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

Further information on the detail of the Private Tenancies Bill can be found [here](#):

**The Committee for Communities membership is:**

Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)

Kellie Armstrong MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Andy Allen MLA

Stephen Dunne MLA

Mark H Durkan MLA

Ciara Ferguson MLA

Paul Frew MLA

Fra McCann MLA

Áine Murphy MLA

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