



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

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21 January 2016

Cc: Mr Clark Bailie  
Ms Alison Cauldwell (TOA)

Dear Andrew

**Public Accounts Committee Evidence Session – Request for Follow Up Information**

I wish to thank you and your officials for attending the Public Accounts Committee meeting on Wednesday, 20 January 2016. The meeting was extremely beneficial in providing the opportunity to discuss concerns and issues arising from the Audit Office report on The Governance of Land and Property in the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

Firstly a number of points were raised during both sessions and I would like to request some additional information:

- In regards to the single occasion that you are aware of a member of staff cellotaping a signature to an official document, can you provide a copy of the document in question.
- The Audit Office's report refers to the 'practice of cellotaping signatures'. Can you advise if this happened more than once, if so how many times and on which documents did this occur?
- In regards to Annadale (Casestudy 5), a Housing Association eventually paid £9.2 million for 50 apartments on the Annadale site (£184,000 each). Can you advise how much of that £9.2m came from DSD grants?
- Can you please provide details of the NIHE Board in 2007.
- Mr McCaughley referred to a document called "*Building up Success*", a DOE document published in 1996. He advised the Committee that this document is a reference to the "enabling" policy that he claims was widely adopted throughout the NIHE.

- Are you aware of this document?
- Has this document been recognised or referred to in the past or presently by NIHE staff?
- Has the Department ever recognised or referred to this document as an “enabling” policy?
- Can you please provide a copy of this document

As you are aware the Committee was unable to complete its questioning due to time constraints. I have therefore included a list of further questions (Annex A) for your attention.

**Please highlight in your response any redactions or restrictions on information that you provide to the Committee as this will be published as part of our inquiry.**

If you are responding by email please use the email address above. I would request a response on the above issues by **4 February 2016**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michaela Boyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Michaela Boyle**  
**Chairperson**  
**Public Accounts Committee**

**Inquiry into The Governance of Land and Property in the Northern Ireland  
Housing Executive: Further Questions**

1. Paragraph 3.4 –notes that DSD’s own internal audit had concerns about the Department’s oversight of land disposals in 2007-08. Please can you outline what these concerns were? Please can you provide an explanation of why no audit opinion was given?
2. Paragraph 3.6 and 3.7 states that Internal Audit’s examination found that the statutory requirement for NIHE to seek approval from the Department, when disposing of land at less than best consideration, had been removed from written guidance and that there was no audit trail on who made this decision. Please can you provide an explanation as to why this was not noticed until it was highlighted by the internal audit examination? Whose responsibility would it have been to oversee this guidance and in particular this omission?
3. Paragraph 3.11 – What action did the Department take following the NIHE’s own internal audit report into land disposal matters in 2007 to address the governance weaknesses?
4. Paragraph 4.4 – At what stage is the NIHE’s review of undeveloped lands? What are the preliminary findings of this review?
5. Paragraph 4.13 - What steps have been taken to improve NIHE’s management systems?